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# **The Oxford Treasury of English Literature**

**Vol. III: Jacobean to Victorian**

**By**

**G. E. Hadow**

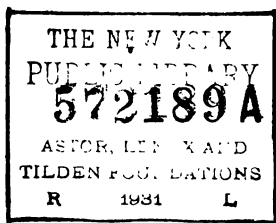
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**Oxford  
At the Clarendon Press  
1908**



HENRY FROWDE, M.A.  
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD  
LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK  
TORONTO AND MELBOURNE

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## PREFACE

THE method of this volume is determined by the same principle as that of its two predecessors. It is primarily intended for students who are beginning a general course of English Literature, and it has been compiled, as far as possible, in reference to their requirements. Again, it makes no attempt to cover the entire ground, but groups its illustrations round those points of interest from which, in our judgement, the chief literary movements of the time have radiated. Our perspective has not allowed us to cite every author who is great or notable, but those alone who best represent their age or whose influence on contemporaries or successors is most clearly apparent.

We wish to offer all cordial thanks to Mr. Bertram Dobell for permitting us to include in this volume two examples from Thomas Traherne. The discovery of this author, who stands with Vaughan at the centre of seventeenth-century mysticism, is one of the signal services which Mr. Dobell has conferred on the study of English Literature.

G. E. H.

W. H. H.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE CHANGE IN LYRIC POETRY

THE lyrics of our Elizabethan age are, for the most part, the direct and simple utterance of human passion. Their most frequent theme is the love of woman, their tone is of absolute sincerity, their perfect music is all unconscious of its perfection, and sings as naturally as birds at pairing-time. In the great examples of Peele and Shakespeare and Fletcher there is not an unusual word or a recondite image: there is no artifice, no parade of skill, no elaboration of metrical form: the supreme issues of love and death, of hope and despair, are presented with a truth and an intensity that strike to the heart like the melody of a folk-song.

With the love-lyrics of the next generation there came a noticeable change. The poet began to think less of his mistress and more of his own attitude towards her: the emotions became secondary and deliberate; the want of true feeling was imperfectly concealed by false wit and undue emphasis. Passion degenerated into a game of skilful and courtly compliment: full of ingenuity and dainty phrase, sometimes resonant with an inspired line or a tuneful cadence, but usually at its best when it made no pretence of being serious. A man has no leisure to lament his lady's absence when, to picture it, he is ransacking the universe for improbable similes; and he pays her an ill compliment when he thinks to win favour by telling her that her tears are more beautiful than any other woman's eyes. Courtship itself assumed a tone of banter, forerunner of that scarce-

veiled contempt which glitters through the lyrics of Congreve; and whether it be expressed in the delicate ivory work of Herrick or the hard and polished lacquer of Cowley, reminds us equally of those Chinese toys in which we open casket after casket until we come to the innermost and there find nothing.

It is a strange coincidence, if indeed it be a coincidence, that the same wave of affectation was flowing, about the same time, over every literature in Europe. In Spain Luis de Gongora (born 1561) gave his name to a far-fetched and extravagant style which clothed every thought alike with a garb of theatrical cotton-velvet; in Italy Marini (born 1569) poured forth a flood of conceits under which his country lay submerged for more than a century: a little later, at the court of Louis XIV, came that curious outburst of sham madrigals and Scudéry romances, of 'counsellors of the Graces' and 'commodities of conversation', until, in 1659, Molière shot them all dead with his *Précieuses Ridicules*. So far, then, as concerns the love poetry of the time, England was but bearing its part in a general movement. Cowley, for good and ill, has many points of resemblance with Chiabrera, and some of our lesser poets are not unlike those who assembled to exchange verses and criticisms at the Hôtel Rambouillet.

There are, however, two points in which the lyrics of our Caroline period struck a higher and more distinctive note. If the love poetry was artificial the religious poetry was pure and genuine: if woman's beauty was a target for the straining arrows of wit, there was a true, though but half-articulate, feeling for the beauty of nature. Here is the real Herrick—the Herrick of *Daffodils* and *Blossoms* and the *Thanksgiving to God for his house*: as simple and sweet as a Christmas Carol or the prayer of a child. Here is Herbert, touched on the surface

by the so-called 'Metaphysical'<sup>1</sup> influence of his time, but at heart a true saint and a true poet. And here, above all, are the mystics who alone would have sufficed to make our seventeenth century immortal. Vaughan and Trahern touch strings which no hand set vibrating again until Wordsworth: they are at one with him in their devotion, their passionate receptivity, their living sense of the immanence of God in nature: the difference is that they are absorbed in the ecstasy which after long and painful labour he learned to control. The boyish visions which he describes in the *Prelude* and in *Tintern Abbey* are of the same light with which their poetry is saturated: what he added was the intellectual power by which imagination itself was mastered and ennobled. Crashaw is a mystic of a very different order; more personal and sensuous, more deeply imbued with Italian softness and colour: it was Vaughan and Traherne who, in a questioning age, stood forth as prophets, and if they spoke with stammering lips, yet looked with unsealed eyes into the heart of the universe.

Meanwhile, along the lower slopes, nature was beginning to reveal herself to the poet. Denham painted the landscape from the easy summit of Cooper's Hill, and took the placid flow of the Thames at once for his subject and for his model: Andrew Marvell wandered 'in a green shade' among the garden alleys or stood by the hazel thicket to observe 'the hatching throistle's gleaming eye'; the feeling was intermittent, it was self-conscious, it was tuned to one uniform key of smiling comfort, but it showed an awakening interest in the country for its own sake, not merely as the background or setting of a human drama.

<sup>1</sup> See Johnson's essay on Cowley for the origin of this unfortunate name. It is commonly applied to Donne, Cowley, Denham, and Waller.

It may be worth adding that the authors who are cited in the present chapter cover a period of more than a century. Donne was born in 1573, Vaughan died in 1695; the one was a boy of eighteen when Shakespeare produced his first play, the other was still living when Shadwell succeeded Dryden as poet laureate. Their work was written amid the shock of many conflicting principles—Cavalier and Roundhead, Commonwealth and Restoration, Romanist claims and Protestant opposition. It is little wonder that they show a wide variety both of topic and of treatment. Yet they all help to illustrate the development of our national character; their skill of craftsmanship undoubtedly trained the hands of their successors, and the true ideas which they put forth germinated in the fullness of time and blossomed into some of the noblest poetry that we possess.

JOHN DONNE (1573-1631) was the son of a London ironmonger, and, on his mother's side, the grandson of John Heywood the epigrammatist. Through her he was also connected with Sir Thomas More. He was brought up in the Roman faith, and was sent to Hart Hall, Oxford, at the age of eleven—boys under sixteen not being required to take the oaths which acknowledged the royal supremacy. In 1592 he was entered at Lincoln's Inn, where he soon became intimate with the chief wits and poets of the day. In 1596 he took part in the expedition of Essex to Cadiz. On his return (August, 1596) he was appointed secretary to the Lord Keeper, Sir Thomas Egerton. A large number of his poems, probably including all the satires, were written during the period of his secretaryship. In 1600 he was secretly married to Anne More, Lady Egerton's niece. Her father, Sir George More, was furious, and caused Donne to lose his post and to be imprisoned for a short time. After his release he fell upon evil days, and for some years had a hard struggle to support his wife and the twelve children who were born to them. Lucy Countess of Bedford befriended him, and at last he attracted the attention of Morton, the most

distinguished of the royal chaplains, and of James himself. Morton was a great controversialist, and Donne's learning proved of valuable assistance to him. He was offered immediate preferment if he would take Orders. For some time religious scruples stood in his way; but he was ordained in 1615, was appointed one of the court chaplains, and soon became famous as a preacher. He was made Reader of Lincoln's Inn; was sent with Lord Doncaster on his mission to Germany; and finally, in 1621, was made Dean of St. Paul's, and was given in addition the livings of Blunham in Bedfordshire and St. Dunstan-in-the-West. His last sermon, one of the most famous, was preached on Ash Wednesday, 1631.

Among his chief works are: *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610); two elegies entitled *An Anatomy of the World* (1611); *The Second Progress of the Soul* (1612); poems (published 1633), including love poems and satires; *Juvenilia, or certain Paradoxes and Problems* (1633); and a large number of sermons.

### EPITHALAMION

*From AN EPITHALAMION, OR MARRIAGE SONG ON THE  
LADY ELIZABETH AND COUNT PALATINE BEING  
MARRIED ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY*

HAIL, Bishop Valentine! whose day is this;

All the air is thy diocese,

And all the chirping choristers

And other birds are thy parishioners:

Thou marriest every year

The lyric lark, and the grave whispering dove,

The sparrow that neglects his life for love,

The household bird with the red stomacher;

Thou makest the blackbird speed as soon

As doth the goldfinch or the halcyon;

10

The husband cock looks out and straight is sped,

And meets his wife, which brings her feather-bed.

This day more cheerfully than ever shine;

This day, which might inflame thyself, old Valentine.



## THE MESSAGE

SEND home my long-strayed eyes to me,  
 Which, oh ! too long have dwelt on thee ;  
 Yet since they there have learned such ill,  
     Such forced fashions,  
     And false passions  
     That they be  
     Made by thee  
 Fit for no good sight, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,  
 Which no unworthy thought could stain :      10  
 But if it be taught by thine  
     To make jestings  
     Of protestings  
     And break both  
     Word and oath,  
 Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.

Yet send me back my heart and eyes  
 That I may know, and see thy lies,  
 And may laugh and joy when thou  
     Art in anguish      20  
     And dost languish  
     For some one  
     That will none,  
 Or prove as false as thou art now.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1674) was the son of a goldsmith in Cheapside. His father died early, and Robert was left to the guardianship of his uncle, William—afterwards Sir William—Herrick. He went to Cambridge, where he was constantly in debt. In 1616 he migrated from St. John's College to Trinity Hall in order to study law. He abandoned the law after a few years, took Orders, and in 1629 was admitted to the

living of Dean Prior in Devonshire. Wood says he 'became much beloved by the gentry in those parts for his florid and witty discourses'. In 1647 he was driven from his living, and settled in London for a time. He returned to Devonshire in 1662, and spent the remainder of his life there.

Many of his poems appeared anonymously in various miscellanies. In 1639 appeared 'An Addition of some excellent Poems to Shakespeare's Poems, by another Gentleman'. The two most important collections of his poems are *Hesperides* (1648) and *Noble Numbers* (written 1647).

### TO DAFFODILS

FAIR daffodils, we weep to see  
 You haste away so soon ;  
 As yet the early-rising sun  
 Has not attained his noon.  
     Stay, stay  
     Until the hasting day  
     Has run  
     But to the evensong ;  
 And, having prayed together, we  
 Will go with you along.

10

We have short time to stay, as you,  
 We have as short a spring ;  
 As quick a growth to meet decay,  
 As you, or anything.  
     We die  
     As your hours do, and dry  
     Away  
     Like to the summer's rain ;  
 Or as the pearls of morning's dew,  
 Ne'er to be found again.

20

## TO ELECTRA

I DARE not ask a kiss ;  
I dare not beg a smile ;  
Lest having that or this,  
I might grow proud the while  
No, no, the utmost share  
Of my desire shall be  
Only to kiss the air  
That lately kissed thee.

## THE BRACELET TO JULIA

WHY I tie about thy wrist,  
Julia, this my silken twist—  
For what other reason is 't,  
But to show thee how in part  
Thou my pretty captive art ?  
But thy bonds slave is my heart.  
'Tis but silk that bindeth thee,  
Knap the thread and thou art free :  
But 'tis otherwise with me ;  
I am fast, and fast bound so  
That from thee I cannot go ;  
If I could, I would not so.

16

## A THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR HIS HOUSE

LORD, Thou hast given me a cell  
Wherein to dwell ;  
A little house, whose humble roof  
Is weatherproof,  
Under the spars of which I lie  
Both soft and dry ;

Where Thou, my chamber for to ward,  
Hast set a guard  
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep  
Me while I sleep. 10  
Low is my porch, as is my fate,  
Both void of state;  
And yet the threshold of my door  
Is worn by th' poor,  
Who thither come and freely get  
Good words or meat.  
Like as my parlour, so my hall  
And kitchen's small:  
A little buttery, and therein  
A little bin, 20  
Which keeps my little loaf of bread  
Unchipped, unfleat<sup>1</sup>;  
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar  
Make me a fire,  
Close by whose living coal I sit,  
And glow like it.  
Lord, I confess too, when I dine,  
The pulse is Thine,  
And all those other bits that be  
There placed by Thee; 30  
The worts, the purslane, and the mess  
Of water-cress,  
Which of Thy kindness Thou hast sent;  
And my content  
Make those, and my beloved beet,  
To be more sweet.  
'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering hearth  
With guiltless mirth,

<sup>1</sup> i. e. 'not stripped of its crust'. Cf. the word 'flay'.

And giv'st me wassail-bowls to drink  
Spiced to the brink.

40

Lord, 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand  
That soils my land,

And giv'st me for my bushel sown  
Twice ten for one:

Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay  
Her egg each day;

Besides my healthful ewes to bear  
Me twins each year;

The while the conduits of my kine  
Run cream for wine.

50

All these and better Thou dost send  
Me, to this end—

That I should render for my part  
A thankful heart,

Which, fired with incense, I resign  
As wholly thine:

But the acceptance—that must be,  
My Christ, by Thee.

### A GRACE FOR A CHILD

HERE, a little child, I stand,  
Heaving up my either hand:  
Cold as paddocks<sup>1</sup> though they be,  
Yet I lift them up to Thee,  
For a benison to fall  
On our meat, and on us all. Amen.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633) was the son of Sir Richard Herbert, and the brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He was educated at Westminster School and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and distinguished himself as a scholar. While at

<sup>1</sup> 'Frogs'.

Cambridge he wrote a series of Latin satiric verses defending the universities for their hostility towards the Puritans. In 1618-19 he became public orator at Cambridge, a post which brought him into frequent relations with the Court. When in Deacon's orders he received the prebend of Layton Ecclesia, to which was attached an estate at Leighton Bromswold. The church at Leighton Bromswold was in ruins. Herbert set to work to restore it, and received much help and advice concerning it from Nicholas Ferrar, with whom he was already intimate. In 1630 Charles I presented him with the living of Fugglestone with Bemerton in Wiltshire. Herbert hesitated to accept it, but his scruples were overcome by Laud, and he settled at Bemerton. He died there three years later.

All his English poems were published posthumously. The most important of them are: *The Temple* (1633); a verse rendering of eight psalms (?), and a few scattered poems including two sonnets to his mother (published by Walton in his *Life of Herbert*), *A Paradox*, and an *Address to the Queen of Bohemia*. His chief prose work is *A Priest to the Temple, or The Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life*. The first edition also included a tract called *Jacula Prudentum*. He added to Ferrar's translation of Lessius's *Hygiasticion* a translation from the Latin of Cornaro, entitled *A Treatise of Temperance and Sobriety*. In 1640 appeared in *Witt's Recreation*, 'Outlandish Proverbs selected by Mr. G. H.,' which was later reprinted with 'The Author's Prayers before and after Sermons'.

### THE COLLAR

I struck the board, and cried 'No more!

I will abroad.

What, shall I ever sigh and pine?

My lines and life are free; free as the road,

Loose as the wind, as large as store.

Shall I be still in suit?

Have I no harvest but a thorn

To let me blood, and not restore

What I have lost with cordial fruit?

Sure there was wine

10

Before my sighs did dry it: there was corn

Before my tears did drown it.

Is the year only lost to me?

Have I no bays to crown it?

No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?

All wasted?

Not so, my heart; but there is fruit,

And thou hast hands.

Recover all thy sigh-blown age

On double pleasures; leave thy cold dispute

20

Of what is fit and not; forsake thy cage,

Thy rope of sands,

Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee

Good cable to enforce and draw,

And be thy law

While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.

Away, take heed:

I will abroad.

Call in thy death's-head there: tie up thy fears.

He that forbears

30

To suit and serve his need,

Deserves his load.'

But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild

At every word,

Methought I heard one calling, 'Child!'

And I replied, 'My Lord!'

## LOVE

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,

Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack

From my first entrance in,

Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,

'If I lacked anything.'

'A guest,' I answered, 'worthy to be here.'

Love said, 'You shall be he.'

'I, the unkind, the ungrateful? Ah, my dear,

I cannot look on Thee.'

10

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame

Go where it doth deserve.'

'And know you not,' says Love, 'who bore the blame?'

'My dear, then I will serve.'

'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat.'

So I did sit and eat.

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT (1606-1668) was the son of an inn-keeper at Oxford. Shakespeare frequently stayed at his father's house, and Davenant's earliest extant poem is an *Ode in Remembrance of Master Shakespeare*, written in his twelfth year. He became page to the Duchess of Richmond, and later entered the household of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke. After Brooke's murder he remained at the Court writing plays and poems. His first drama, *The Tragedy of Albovine, King of the Lombards*, appeared in 1629. In 1630 *The Cruel Brother* and *The Just Italian* were acted. In 1633 came *The Wits*, a comedy, and in 1634 *The Temple of Love*, a masque written in collaboration with Inigo Jones. For some years Davenant continued to produce plays with great rapidity, beside writing poems. In 1635 he published *Madagascar and other Poems*, and his plays were interspersed with lyrics. In 1638 he became poet laureate. He attached himself to the Royalist cause during the war, and was knighted at the siege of Gloucester (1643). After the king's defeat he fled to France, where he became a Roman Catholic. He was sent on a mission to Virginia, was captured by Roundheads before he was clear of the French coast, and spent two years in the Tower. While in prison he published the first edition of *Gondibert*, an heroic poem in three books, written in quatrains. After his release he obtained permission to give entertainments by 'Declamations and Music' in private



houses, and so founded English opera. Later he became manager of the Duke of York's company, and his theatre was known as 'The Opera'. Besides producing a large number of original plays, he collaborated with Dryden in rewriting *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*, and also adapted *Two Noble Kinsmen* under the title of *The Rivals*. His last comedy, *Man's the Master*, was published after his death.

### AUBADE

THE lark now leaves his watery nest,  
 And, climbing, shakes his dewy wings.  
 He takes this window for the East,  
 And to implore your light he sings—  
 Awake! awake! the morn will never rise  
 Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,  
 The ploughman from the sun his season takes;  
 But still the lover wonders what they are  
 Who look for day before his mistress wakes. 10  
 Awake! awake! break through your veils of lawn!  
 Then draw your curtains, and begin the dawn!

SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609-1642) was one of the most striking figures at the Court of Charles I. He fought as a volunteer under Gustavus Adolphus, but returned to London in 1632, and became noted for his wit and prodigality. His first play, *Aglaura*, appeared in 1637. In 1639 he raised a troop of horse to assist the king in the Scotch war, and was much laughed at for the splendour of his uniforms. He was given a commission as captain of carabineers, and in the same year produced *The Discontented Colonel*, an attack upon the Scotch. It was later reprinted as *Brenmoralt*. He was compelled to flee from England after the defeat of the Royalists, and shortly afterwards appeared a burlesque letter giving an account of his life, and several spurious pamphlets professing to describe his conversion to Protestantism. Very few of his works were published during his lifetime. Four years after his death appeared a volume

called *Fragmenta Aurea*, which contained all the best of his poems, three plays – including *The Goblins*—letters to various personages, and a tract on Socinianism.

## THE CONSTANT LOVER

Out upon it, I have loved  
Three whole days together !  
And am like to love three more,  
If it prove fair weather.  
Time shall moult away his wings  
Ere he shall discover  
In the whole wide world again  
Such a constant lover.  
But the spite on 't is, no praise  
Is due at all to me :  
Love with me had made no stays,  
Had it any been but she.  
Had it any been but she,  
And that very face,  
There had been at least ere this  
A dozen dozen in her place.

10

RICHARD LOVELACE (1618–1658) was educated at Charterhouse and at Gloucester Hall, Oxford. He wrote occasional verses and one play, *The Scholar*, while at the University. On leaving Oxford he was received with great favour at Court, where he was noted for his beauty and great personal charm. He became ensign in Lord Goring's regiment, and was soon promoted to be captain. He fought in the Scotch war, but after the pacification of Berwick returned to take possession of the family property. In 1642 he was chosen to present a petition to Parliament on behalf of the king, and was imprisoned in consequence. While in the Gatehouse he wrote his famous lyric *To Althea*. He was released after a few weeks' captivity, and lived for some time in London, till he could join the

king's forces. After the surrender of Oxford (1646) he went abroad, and raised a regiment for the service of the French king. He was wounded at Dunkirk, returned to England in 1648, and was once more imprisoned. In 1649 appeared *Lucasta*; *Epodes, Odes, Sonnets, Songs, etc.* To which is added *Aramanitha, a Pastoral*. He was released in the same year, but having spent a large fortune in the royal cause he fell into great poverty, and died in want.

### TO LUCASTA, GOING TO THE WARS

TELL me not, Sweet, I am unkind,  
That from the nunnery  
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind  
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,  
The first foe in the field;  
And with a stronger faith embrace  
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such  
As thou too shalt adore; 10  
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,  
Loved I not Honour more.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618-1667) was educated at Westminster and at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became famous as a boy poet. *Pyramus and Thisbe* was written when he was ten, and *Constantius and Philetus* at twelve. In 1638 he published *Love's Riddle*, a pastoral drama. In the same year his Latin comedy, *Naufragium Jocularis*, was acted by the University. *The Guardian*, afterwards rewritten under the title of *The Cutter of Coleman Street*, was hurriedly written to entertain Prince Charles when he visited Cambridge (1641). In 1643-4 he left Cambridge for Oxford, and settled in St. John's College, where he became intimate with the Royalist leaders. He was employed on several foreign missions, and for some time conducted a cipher correspondence between the king and queen. In 1647 appeared

*The Mistress*, and in 1648 two satires, *The Four Ages of England*, or *the Iron Age*, and *A Satyre against Separatists*. The most important of his works, including the  *Davideis*, which he began at Cambridge, and the *Pindaric Odes*, were collected and published in one volume in 1656. He was much interested in learning and in the scientific movement of his day. In 1661 he published a *Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy*, and this was followed by an *Ode to the Royal Society* and an *Ode to Hobbes*. He had spent all his property in the royal service, and after several unsuccessful applications, at last received some acknowledgement from the king, which enabled him to retire to the country, and finally settled at Chertsey, where he died. The first complete collection of his works appeared in 1668, and included *Several Discourses by way of Essays in Prose and Verse*.

## THE SPRING

THOUGH you be absent here, I needs must say  
 The trees as beauteous are and flowers as gay  
     As ever they were wont to be ;  
     Nay the birds' rural music too  
     Is as melodious and free  
     As if they sung to pleasure you :  
 I saw a rose-bud ope this morn ; I'll swear  
 The blushing morning opened not so fair.

How could it be so fair, and you away ?  
 How could the trees be beauteous, flowers so gay ?   10  
     Could they remember but last year  
     How you did them, they you delight,  
     The sprouting leaves which saw you here,  
     And called their fellows to the sight,  
 Would, looking round for the same sight in vain,  
 Creep back into their silent barks again.

But who can blame them now? for since you're gone  
They're here the only Fair, and shine alone.

You did their natural rights invade :

Wherever you did walk or sit

20

The thickest boughs could make no shade

Although the sun had granted it :

The fairest flowers could please no more, near you,  
Than painted flowers set next to them could do.

Whene'er, then, you come hither, that shall be  
The time, which this to others is, to me.

The little joys, which here are now,

The name of punishments do bear,

When by their sight they let us know

How we deprived of greater are.

30

'Tis you the best of seasons with you bring ;

This is for beasts, and that for men, the Spring.

ANDREW MARVELL (1621-1678) was noted both as Puritan and Royalist. In his youth he spent some years on the Continent, and among his earliest works are two satires on Richard Flecknoe, the Irish poetaster, whom he met in Rome. About 1650 he became tutor to the daughter of Lord Fairfax, and he spent the next year or two at Nun Appleton, in Yorkshire. To this period belong his poems in praise of country life and retirement. Three years later he applied for a post under the Commonwealth, and, on Milton's recommendation, was made assistant-secretary for foreign tongues, and was also appointed tutor to Cromwell's ward, William Dutton. In 1657 he became Milton's colleague in the Latin secretaryship, and a little later was given official lodgings in Whitehall. He wrote several poems on the Lord Protector, but only one of them was published before the Restoration, and he continued his political life under Charles II. In 1661 he was for the third time elected member for his native city, Hull, and in 1663 he accompanied Lord Carlisle as secretary during his foreign embassy. It is said

that Milton's impunity after the Restoration was largely owing to the influence of Marvell. His letters show considerable political insight and sound judgement. His satires reflecting on the policy of the king were circulated privately, but on the question of religious toleration Marvell openly declared himself on the side of the Nonconformists, and in 1672-3 he published the two parts of *The Rehearsal Transposed*, a satire attack upon the Anglican champion, Parker (afterwards Bishop of Oxford). Two other controversial pamphlets followed. In 1677 a great sensation was created by the anonymous publication of *An Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government in England*. £100 was offered for the discovery of the author, but Marvell's death occurred before any steps could be taken.

### THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze  
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,  
And their incessant labours see  
Crown'd from some single herb or tree,  
Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade  
Does prudently their toils upbraid ;  
While all the flowers and tree do close  
To weave the garlands of repose !

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,  
And Innocence thy sister dear ?  
Mistaken long, I sought you then  
In busy companies of men :  
Your sacred plants, if here below,  
Only among the plants will grow ;  
Society is all but rude  
To this delicious solitude.

10

What wondrous life is this I lead !  
Ripe apples drop about my head ;

The luscious clusters of the vine  
Upon my mouth do crush their wine , 20  
Thy nectarine and curious peach  
Into my hands themselves do reach ;  
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,  
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less  
Withdraws into its happiness ;  
The mind, that ocean where each kind  
Does straight its own resemblance find ;  
Yet it creates, transcending these,  
Far other worlds, and other seas ; 30  
Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,  
Casting the body's vest aside,  
My soul into the boughs does glide ;  
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,  
Then whets and combs its silver wings,  
And, till prepared for longer flight,  
Waves in its plumes the various light. 40

Such was that happy Garden-state  
While man there walk'd without a mate :  
After a place so pure and sweet,  
What other help could yet be meet !  
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share  
To wander solitary there :  
Two paradises 'twere in one,  
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew  
Of flowers and herbs this dial new ! 50

Where, from above, the milder sun  
 Does through a fragrant zodiac run :  
 And, as it works, the industrious bee  
 Computes its time as well as we.  
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours  
 Be reckoned, but with herbs and flowers !

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622-1695) was a Welshman, and was educated at Jesus College, Oxford. He studied first law and then medicine, and began to practise as a physician about 1645. In 1646 he published a small volume entitled '*Poems, with the Tenth Satyre of Juvenal Englished*'. Another volume, '*Olor Iscanus: a Collection of some select Poems and Translations,*' was probably written in 1647, but was not published until 1651, when it was printed by his brother. Vaughan fell much under the influence of George Herbert, and in 1650 appeared '*Silex Scintillans: or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*', which was followed by a second part in 1655. He also wrote a small volume of devotion in prose: *The Mount of Olives*. In 1678 *Thalia Rediviva* was published, and with it several other poems by Vaughan and a few pieces by his twin-brother, Thomas.

## THE NIGHT

JOHN III. 2

THROUGH that pure virgin shrine,  
 That sacred veil drawn o'er Thy glorious noon,  
 That men might look and live, as glow-worms shine  
 And face the moon :  
 Wise Nicodemus saw such light  
 As made him know his God by night.

Most blest believer he !  
 Who in that land of darkness and blind eyes  
 Thy long-expected healing wings could see  
 When Thou didst rise !

10

And, what can never more be done,  
 Did at midnight speak with the Sun !



Oh, who will tell me where  
 He found Thee at that dead and silent hour ?  
 What hallowed solitary ground did bear  
     So rare a flower ;  
 Within whose sacred leaves did lie  
 The fullness of the Deity ?

No mercy-seat of gold,  
 No dead and dusty cherub, nor carved stone,  
 But His own living works did my Lord hold,  
     And lodge alone,  
 Where trees and herbs did watch and peep  
 And wonder, while the Jews did sleep.

20

Dear Night ! this world's defeat ;  
 The stop to busy fools ; care's check and curb ;  
 The day of spirits ; my soul's calm retreat  
     Which none disturb !  
 Christ's progress and His prayer-time ;  
 The hours to which high Heaven doth chime.

30

God's silent, searching flight ;  
 When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all  
 His locks are wet with the clear drops of night ;  
     His still, soft call ;  
 His knocking-time ; the soul's dumb-watch,  
 When spirits their fair kindred catch.

Where all my loud, evil days  
 Calm and unhaunted as is thy dark tent,  
 Whose peace but by some angel's wing or voice  
     Is seldom rent ;  
 Then I in heaven all the long year  
 Would keep, and never wander here.

40

But living where the sun  
 Doth all things wake, and where all mix and tire  
 Themselves and others, I consent and run  
     To every mire ;  
 And by this world's ill-guiding light  
 Err more than I can do by night.

There is in God—some say—  
 A deep but dazzling darkness ; as men here      50  
 Say it is late and dusky because they  
     See not all clear.  
 Oh, for that Night ! where I in Him  
 Might live invisible and dim.

THOMAS TRAHERNE (1636 ?-1674) appears to have been the son of 'John Traherne Shoemaker' of Hereford. Little is known of his life. It is probable that he was of Welsh descent, but the only accounts of his youth are to be found in the poetic descriptions of childhood, of which his writings are full. He was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford, entered the ministry, and was appointed 'clerk' at Credenhill, Herefordshire, in 1657. Among his prose works are *Centuries of Meditations* (from which is taken the extract printed in this book), *Roman Forgeries*, a controversial pamphlet directed against the Church of Rome, and a treatise on *Christian Ethics*. In 1667 he became chaplain to Sir Orlando, afterwards Lord Bridgman, and it was at his patron's house at Teddington that he died. His poems were not published until long after his death, and for almost two centuries he was practically forgotten.

### DUMBNESS

SURE Man was born to meditate on Things,  
 And to contemplate the Eternal Springs  
 Of God and Nature, Glory, Bliss, and Pleasure,  
 That Life and Love might be his Heavenly Treasure :  
 And therefore speechless made at first, that he  
 Might in himself profoundly busied be ;

And not vent out, before he hath taken in  
Those antidotes that guard his soul from sin.

Wise Nature made him deaf too, that he might  
Not be disturbed, while he doth take delight  
In inward things, nor be depraved with tongues,  
Nor injured by the errors and the wrongs  
That *mortal words* convey.

10

This, my dear friends, this was my blessed case ;  
For nothing spake to me but the fair face  
Of Heaven and Earth, before myself could speak.  
*I then my bliss did, when my silence, break.*

Then did I dwell within a world of light,  
Distinct and separate from all men's sight,  
Where I did feel strange thoughts, and such things see  
That were, or seemed, only revealed to me.  
There saw I all the world enjoyed by one ;  
There was I in the world myself alone ;  
No business serious seemed but one ; no work  
But one was found—and that in me did lurk.

20

D'ye ask me what ? It was with clearer eyes  
To see all creatures full of deities,  
Especially one's self ; and to admire  
The satisfaction of all true desire :  
'Twas to be pleased with all that God hath done ;  
'Twas to enjoy *even all* beneath the sun :  
'Twas with a steady and immediate sense  
To feel and measure all the excellence  
Of things ; 'twas to inherit endless treasure,  
And to be filled with everlasting pleasure ;  
To reign in silence, and to sing alone,  
To see, love, covet, have, enjoy, and praise in one ;  
To prize and to be ravished ; to be true,

30

Sincere, and single in a blessed view  
Of all His gifts. Thus was I pent within 40  
A fort impregnable to any sin,  
Until the avenues being open laid,  
Whole legions entered, and the forts betrayed ;  
Before which time a pulpit in my mind.  
A temple and a teacher I did find,  
With a large text to comment on. No ear  
But eyes themselves were all the hearers there,  
And every stone and every star a tongue,  
And every gale of wind a curious song.  
The Heavens were an oracle, and spake 50  
Divinity. The Earth did undertake  
The office of a priest ; and I being dumb  
(Nothing besides was dumb), all things did come  
With voices and instructions ; but when I  
Had gained a tongue, their power began to die.

## CHAPTER II

### MILTON

THE literary career of Milton falls naturally into three divisions. The first, from 1625 to 1640, is the period of his early poems—of the *Hymn on the Nativity*, of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, of *Comus* and *Lycidas*. The second, from 1640 to 1660, that is from the Long Parliament to the Restoration, is the period of his controversial pamphlets—of *Areopagitica* and *Eikonoklastes* and the great *Defence of the People of England*, which overthrew Salmasius—and contains virtually no poems except sonnets and a few paraphrases and translations.<sup>1</sup> The third, from 1660 to 1671, is the culminating time of *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, when he withdrew almost entirely from public life, and, left at liberty by the contemptuous tolerance of a government which he disowned, devoted his closing years to the service of his art.

Thus, though it is saturated with political feeling, his poetry stands in singular detachment from the actual changes and fluctuations of current events. Part was written before he entered the arena; part was written after the struggle had ended in defeat: the former sounds a few premonitory notes of conflict, like the attack on church abuses in *Lycidas*, but is for the most part as remote and self-contained as a college garden; in the latter he resolutely

<sup>1</sup> The idea of treating *Paradise Lost* (as a Drama) was first conceived about 1641, and there is evidence that the Address to the Sun (Bk. IV, l. 32, &c.) was composed about then for its opening. Milton, however, deliberately laid it aside and did not return to it until after 1658, when he adopted the epic form. It was finished in 1663.

fastened his study door against the world and gave himself up to solitude and to contemplation. There is hardly any poet who so little reflects the age in which he lived.

It is not here proposed to attempt, in five pages of introduction, an estimate of Milton's genius. For that 'last reward of consummated scholarship' the student will consult the writings of Addison and Johnson, of Hazlitt and De Quincy and Landor, of Pattison and Masson and Raleigh. A few isolated points, however, may here be noted, not because they are new, but because in the immense range and variety of the subject they are in some danger of being overlooked. The first is the vividness and accuracy of his descriptions of nature. It is true that he has little gift of pictorial composition—Eve's bower, for example, is a tangle of incongruous beauties—but in the presentation of detail he is unsurpassed. His epithets are as just as they are unexpected—the 'wan' cowslip, the 'glowing' violet, the 'russet lawns and fallows grey' of early morning. He loves the low-creeping mist in the valley; the country fragrance of 'grain or teded grass or kine'; the song of birds at daybreak when the sun, clear-shining after rain, has

Dried the wet

On drooping plant or drooping tree.<sup>1</sup>

His blind eyes could behold the sky, thick with tempest, 'like a dark ceiling,' or the home-coming fleet that on the far horizon 'hangs in the clouds'. Of all false criticisms that have been urged against Milton, the most false is that he saw Nature through the spectacles of books.

The second, so far as his self-imposed limitations would allow, is his power of delineating character. Satan, as depicted in *Paradise Lost*, is finely and

<sup>1</sup> *Paradise Regained*, IV. 433. See the whole passage.

consistently drawn: his pride, his courage, his masterful resolution,<sup>1</sup> the tremendous irony with which he edges his purpose at the moment nearest to relenting,<sup>2</sup> his disdain of the loathsome form which he is to assume<sup>3</sup>: there is a splendour in the whole conception which removes it as far from the incarnate evil of Puritan Theology as from the grotesque fiends of mediaeval legend. Again, the scene between Samson and Dalila<sup>4</sup> is a wonderful study of a bad woman who, in place of penitence, feels only the sting of wounded vanity, who tries by every device of cajolery and insincere excuse to bring her betrayed lover back again to her feet, and who shows, by the voluble indignation of her failure, that she had no other purpose than to succeed. Finer still, because more subtle, is the change wrought by the Fall upon the characters of Adam and Eve. All the essential qualities which were there before are there still, but they are all for the moment warped and degraded. Eve's impulsiveness turns to unthinking falsehood, her quickness of intelligence to sophistry, her very love becomes tainted with selfish fears<sup>5</sup>; Adam's rebuke, grave and dignified before he partakes of the transgression, grows afterwards harsh, stern, and acrimonious. Yet because knowledge is of good as well as evil, the better part in the end prevails; love and hope and strength return with a deeper note of experience, and Eve's closing words<sup>6</sup> are full of the promise of a new life.

Thirdly, for all his magnificent austerity, Milton has moments of very keen and genuine feeling. The sonnet on his 'late-espoused Saint' is an instance, so is that on the Massacres in Piedmont, which burns like one of the denunciatory Psalms;

<sup>1</sup> Bk. II, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. IV, 358-92.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. IX, 162-78.

<sup>4</sup> *Samson Agonistes*, 710-996.

<sup>5</sup> See especially her speeches on pp. 60, 63, 65 of this volume.

<sup>6</sup> Bk. XII, 614-24.

the three famous passages on his blindness rise tone by tone to a cry of almost intolerable agony. No doubt such moments are rare—Milton was not one who frequently unlocked his heart—but when they come they are overwhelming.

His two most obvious faults are so obvious that they need little more than the bare mention. He had no humour—the elephant of his Eden is the type and pattern of his own jesting, and we could well spare the frigid epigrams, the scene of Satan's artillery, and, except for one memorable line, the sonnet on Tetrachordon. Worse than this, he has, in the highest matters, no reticence. Dante, who describes every circle in Hell and every step of the Hill of Purgatory, turns back in awe from the White Rose of Paradise. St. John was admitted to the vision of the Son of Man, 'And when I saw Him I fell at his feet as dead.' Milton stands in the Presence with knee unbent and head unbowed: he relates the ineffable, he circumscribes the Infinite, he penetrates into the celestial counsels, and without misgiving 'justifies the ways of God'. His Heaven is a little lower than Olympus: a mundane kingdom which is stately, wise, dignified, but not divine.

To speak of his poetic form is to speak of the nearest approach to perfection that English verse has yet attained. It was influenced by Spenser and Marlowe: 'Mr. Milton,' says Dryden, 'hath confessed to me that Spenser was his original'; but it far surpasses even the two great models which it followed. Strong, sonorous, flexible, rich with classic idiom and allusion, it holds in faultless design its counterchange of circling rhythms: like some vast polyphonic web of melodies that call and answer and intertwine at a solemn music. There is no blank verse like that of *Paradise Lost*; none other that moves with such fullness and majesty, that



carries such variety of stress and colour, that has so supreme a sense of the value of noble words. Tennyson spoke of Virgil's hexameter as 'the state-liest measure ever moulded by the lips of man': if it be possible to compare two achievements so dissimilar, we may find here a rival by whom even that pre-eminence can be challenged.

JOHN MILTON (1608-1674) was born in London and educated at St. Paul's and at Christ's College, Cambridge. According to Aubrey he was a poet from the age of ten; and he certainly wrote poems both in Latin and English while at the University. For some time after he thought of taking Orders, but he was strongly opposed to the Church policy of Laud, and finally abandoned the idea and settled with his father at Horton. Here he wrote *L'Allegro* and *Penseroso* (probably in 1632). In 1634 he wrote the masque of *Arcades*, and this was shortly followed by *Comus*, which was acted at Ludlow Castle in September, 1634. *Lycidas* appeared in 1637. Milton now spent some time travelling in Italy, where he was well received. He repaid the civilities of his hosts with Latin and Italian poems. He was recalled to England by the condition of affairs, and in 1639 he settled in Aldersgate Street and devoted himself to the education of his two nephews. More pupils came later, and for a short time Milton kept a sort of small school. He was already planning a great poem on the lines of *Paradise Lost*, but political events caused him deliberately to lay aside poetry and take to pamphlet writing. In 1641 he published anonymously three pamphlets in defence of Smectymnuus against the English Bishops: *Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England*; *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*; and *Animadversions upon the Remonstrance Defence*. These were followed by *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy* (1641-2). In 1643 he married Mary Powell, daughter of a cavalier squire near Oxford. His wife was only seventeen, and the marriage proved unhappy. In the same year were published Milton's first pamphlets upon freedom of divorce. These were unlicensed, and the House of Commons directed search to be made for the authors and printers, with a view to punishing them. The only result, however, was the publication of the

*Areopagitica* (1644), which vindicated the liberty of unlicensed printing. Milton now gave up teaching and devoted himself to writing his *History of Britain*. The death of Charles I called forth *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, and in the same year (1648-9) the Council of State invited him to become their Latin secretary. In October, 1649, he wrote *Eikonoklastes*, a formal defence of the execution of Charles. In 1650 came the *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio*, which cost Milton his eyesight. In the meantime he had been reconciled to his wife. She died in 1652, leaving him with three daughters. In 1654 he wrote the *Defensio Secunda*, and in 1655 *Pro se Defensio*, with which he ended this controversy. In 1656 he married Catharine Woodcock, who died within a year. A few short pamphlets appeared during the next four years. In 1660 it was ordered that the *Defensio* should be burned by the common hangman, and Milton himself was arrested. He was released very shortly, and was allowed to pass the remainder of his life without molestation. In 1662-3 he married for the third time, and soon afterwards moved to Bunhill Fields, where he finally settled. He had already (in 1658) begun to work at *Paradise Lost*. It was completed in 1663. In 1671 *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* appeared together.

Among the more important of his works, in addition to those mentioned, are : Sonnets, written as occasion called them forth, and scattered over many years; the tractate *Of Education* (1644); and *A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes* (1658-9).

## SONGS FROM COMUS

SWEET Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen  
 Within thy airy shell  
 By slow Meander's margent green;  
 And in the violet-embroidered vale  
 Where the love-lorn nightingale  
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:  
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair  
 That liketh thy Narcissus<sup>1</sup> are?

<sup>1</sup> A beautiful youth beloved by the nymph Echo. Ovid, *Met.* iii. 356, &c.

O, if thou have  
 Hid them in some flowery cave, 10  
 Tell me but where,  
 Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the Sphere!  
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,  
 And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

Sabrina fair,  
 Listen where thou art sitting  
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave;  
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting  
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;  
 Listen for dear honour's sake,  
 Goddess of the silver lake,  
 Listen and save.

Sabrina rises, attended by Water-nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,  
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank, 10  
 My sliding chariot stays;  
 Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen  
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green  
 That in the channel strays;  
 Whilst from off the waters fleet,  
 Thus I set my printless feet  
 O'er the cowslip's velvet head,  
 That bends not as I tread;  
 Gentle swain, at thy request  
 I am here.

#### FROM AREOPAGITICA

Now once again by all concurrence of signs and by the  
 general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily  
 and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to

begin some new and great period in his Church, even to the reforming of Reformation itself. What does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and as his manner is, first to his Englishmen ; I say as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels and are unworthy ? Behold now this vast city : a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection ; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, then there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present as with their homage and their fealty the approaching Reformation, others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and conviction. What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge ? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil but wise and faithful labourers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies ? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest ; there need not be five weeks ; had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already. Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions ; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men, to reassume the ill deputed care of their religion into their own hands again.

. . . . .

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle muing<sup>1</sup> her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

### PARADISE LOST. BOOK IX

THE Sun was sunk, and after him the star  
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring  
 Twilight upon the Earth, short arbiter 50  
 'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end  
 Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round,  
 When Satan, who late fled before the threats  
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved  
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent  
 On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap  
 Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.  
 By night he fled, and at midnight returned  
 From compassing the Earth—cautious of day  
 Since Uriel, Regent of the Sun, descried 60  
 His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim  
 That kept their watch. Thence, full of anguish, driven,  
 The space of seven continued nights he rode  
 With darkness—thrice the equinoctial line  
 He circled, four times crossed the car of Night  
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure<sup>2</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> A word used of birds when they cast feathers.

<sup>2</sup> Two great circles, drawn by astronomers, connecting the North and South Poles.

On the eighth returned, and on the coast averse  
From entrance or cherubic watch by stealth  
Found unsuspected way. There was a place  
(Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wrought the change)  
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise, 71  
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part  
Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life.  
In with the river sunk, and with it rose  
Satan, involved in rising mist ; then sought  
Where to lie hid. Sea he had searched and land  
From Eden over Pontus, and the Pool  
Maeotis<sup>1</sup>, up beyond the river Ob<sup>2</sup> ;  
Downward as far antarctic ; and, in length,  
West from Orontes<sup>3</sup> to the ocean barred 80  
At Darien<sup>4</sup>, thence to the land where flows  
Ganges and Indus. Thus the orb he roamed  
With narrow search, and with inspection deep  
Considered every creature, which of all  
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found  
The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.  
Him, after long debate, irresolute  
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose  
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90  
From sharpest sight ; for in the wily snake,  
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtlety  
Proceeding, which, in other beasts observed,  
Doubt might beget of diabolic power  
Active within beyond the sense of brute.  
Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief

<sup>1</sup> The Sea of Azov.

<sup>2</sup> Siberian river flowing into the Arctic Ocean.

<sup>3</sup> In Syria.

<sup>4</sup> Separating the Atlantic and Pacific.

His bursting passion into plaints thus poured :—

‘O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred  
 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100  
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old !  
 For what God, after better, worse would build ?  
 Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens,  
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,  
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,  
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams  
 Of sacred influence ! As God in Heaven  
 Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou  
 Centring receiv’st from all those orbs ; in thee,  
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears, 110  
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth  
 Of creatures animate with gradual life  
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.  
 With what delight could I have walked thee round,  
 If I could joy in aught—sweet interchange  
 Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,  
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crowned,  
 Rocks, dens, and caves ! But I in none of these  
 Find place or refuge ; and the more I see  
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120  
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
 Of contraries ; all good to me becomes  
 Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.  
 But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven,  
 To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven’s Supreme ;  
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
 By what I seek, but others to make such  
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound.  
 For only in destroying I find ease  
 To my relentless thoughts ; and him destroyed,<sup>1</sup> 130

<sup>1</sup> Sc. ‘if he be destroyed’.

Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
For whom all this was made, all this will soon  
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe:  
In woe then, that destruction wide may range!  
To me shall be the glory sole among  
The Infernal Powers, in one day to have marred  
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days  
Continued making, and who knows how long  
Before had been contriving? though perhaps  
Not longer than since I in one night freed 140  
From servitude inglorious wellnigh half  
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng  
Of his adorers. He, to be avenged,  
And to repair his numbers thus impaired—  
Whether such virtue, spent of old, now failed  
More Angels to create (if they at least  
Are his created), or to spite us more—  
Determined to advance into our room  
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,  
Exalted from so base original, 150  
With heavenly spoils, our spoils. What he decreed  
He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat,  
Him lord pronounced, and, O indignity!  
Subjected to his service Angel-wings  
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend  
Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance  
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapped in mist  
Of midnight vapour, glide obscure, and pry  
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160  
The Serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds  
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.  
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended  
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained



Into a beast, and, mixed with bestial slime,  
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
 That to the height of deity aspired ;  
 But what will not ambition and revenge  
 Descend to ? Who aspires must down as low  
 As high he soared, obnoxious <sup>1</sup>, first or last, 170  
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
 Bitter ere long back on itself recoils.  
 Let it ; I reckon not, so it light well aimed,  
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite  
 Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,  
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised  
 From dust : spite then with spite is best repaid.'

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,  
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on 180  
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find  
 The Serpent. Him fast sleeping soon he found,  
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,  
 His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles :  
 Nor yet in horrid shade or dismal den,  
 Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb,  
 Fearless, unfeared, he slept. In at his mouth  
 The Devil entered, and his brutal sense  
 In heart or head, possessing soon inspired  
 With act intelligential ; but his sleep 190  
 Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.

Adam and Eve separate for the morning's work. Satan casts  
 about for a way to meet with them.

In bower and field he sought, where any tuft  
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,  
 Their tendance or plantation for delight ;

<sup>1</sup> Sc. 'liable'.

By fountain or by shady rivulet 420  
He sought them both, but wished his hap might find  
Eve separate ; he wished, but not with hope  
Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wish,  
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,  
Half-spied, so thick the roses bushing round  
About her glowed, oft stooping to support  
Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay  
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,  
Hung drooping unsustained. Them she upstays, 430  
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while  
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,  
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.  
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed  
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm ;  
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen  
Among thick-woven arborets and flowers  
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve :  
Spot more delicious than those gardens<sup>1</sup> feigned  
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned 440  
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son,  
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king  
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.  
Much he the place admired, the person more.  
As one who, long in populous city pent,  
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,  
The smell of grain, or tedded<sup>2</sup> grass, or kine, 450  
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound ;

<sup>1</sup> See *Faery Queene*, III. vi ; *Comus*, 998-1002 ; Homer, *Odyssey*, VII.

<sup>2</sup> Spread in the hay-field.

If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,  
 What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more,  
 She most, and in her looks sums all delight:  
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve  
 Thus early, thus alone. Her heavenly form  
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,  
 Her graceful innocence, her every air  
 Of gesture or least action, overawed  
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved  
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.  
 That space the Evil One abstracted stood  
 From his own evil, and for the time remained  
 Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,  
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.  
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,  
 Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,  
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
 Of pleasure not for him ordained. Then soon  
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:—

‘Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what sweet  
 Compulsion thus transported to forget  
 What hither brought us? hate, not love, nor hope  
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,  
 Save what is in destroying; other joy  
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass  
 Occasion which now smiles. Behold alone  
 The Woman, opportune to all attempts;  
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,  
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;

Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,  
 I not ; so much hath Hell debased, and pain  
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.  
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,  
 Not terrible, though terror be in love, 490  
 And beauty, not <sup>1</sup> approached by stronger hate,  
 Hate stronger under show of love well feigned,  
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.'

So spake the Enemy of Mankind, enclosed  
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve  
 Addressed his way : not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,  
 Circular base of rising folds, that towered  
 Fold above fold, a surging maze ; his head  
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes ; 500  
 With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
 Floated redundant. Pleasing was his shape  
 And lovely ; never since of serpent kind  
 Lovelier—not those that in Illyria changed  
 Hermione <sup>2</sup> and Cadmus, or the god  
 In Epidaurus <sup>3</sup> ; nor to which transformed  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen,  
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore  
 Scipio, the height of Rome.<sup>4</sup> With tract oblique 510  
 At first, as one who sought access but feared  
 To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.  
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought

<sup>1</sup> Sc. 'if not'.

<sup>2</sup> Wife of Cadmus, usually called Harmonia. See Matthew Arnold's poem on them.

<sup>3</sup> Aesculapius, whose emblem was a serpent.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander the Great was fabled to be the son of Jupiter Ammon and Olympias ; Scipio Africanus, who saved Rome from Carthage, to be the son of Jupiter Capitolinus. In both cases the god was said to have assumed the form of a serpent.

Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail,  
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train  
 Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,  
 To lure her eye. She, busied, heard the sound  
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used  
 To such disport before her through the field, 520  
 From every beast, more duteous at her call  
 Than at Circean<sup>1</sup> call the herd disguised  
 He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,  
 But as in gaze admiring. Oft he bowed  
 His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,  
 Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.  
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length  
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad  
 Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue  
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530  
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:—

‘Wonder not, sovran Mistress (if perhaps  
 Thou canst who art sole wonder), much less arm  
 Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,  
 Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze  
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared  
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.  
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,  
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine  
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore, 540  
 With ravishment beheld—there best beheld  
 Where universally admired. But here,  
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,  
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,

<sup>1</sup> Circe turned the companions of Odysseus into swine. See *Od.* x. 230-40. *Ovid, Met.* xiv. 45-6.

Who sees thee (and what is one?) who shouldst be  
seen

A Goddess among Gods, adored and served  
By Angels numberless, thy daily train ?'

So glozed the Tempter, and his poem tuned.  
Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550  
Though at the voice much marvelling ; at length,  
Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake :—

'What may this mean? Language of Man pronounced  
By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed !  
The first at least of these I thought denied  
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day  
Created mute to all articulate sound ;  
The latter I demur, for in their looks  
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.  
Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560  
I knew, but not with human voice endued ;  
Redouble, then, this miracle, and say,  
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how  
To me so friendly grown above the rest  
Of brutal kind that daily are in sight :  
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.'

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied :—  
'Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve !  
Easy to me it is to tell thee all  
What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be  
obeyed. 570

I was at first as other beasts that graze  
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,  
As was my food, nor aught but food discerned  
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high :  
Till on a day, roving the field, I chanced  
A goodly tree far distant to behold,  
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,

Ruddy and gold. I nearer drew to gaze ;  
When from the boughs a savory odour blown, 580  
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense  
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats  
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,  
Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.  
To satisfy the sharp desire I had  
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved  
Not to defer ; hunger and thirst at once,  
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent  
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.  
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon ;  
For, high from ground, the branches would require 590  
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's : round the tree  
All other beasts that saw, with like desire  
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.  
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung  
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill  
I spared not ; for such pleasure till that hour  
At feed or fountain never had I found.  
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive  
Strange alteration in me, to degree  
Of reason in my inward powers, and speech 600  
Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.  
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep  
I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind  
Considered all things visible in Heaven,  
Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good.  
But all that fair and good in thy divine  
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,  
United I beheld—no fair to thine  
Equivalent or second ; which compelled  
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610  
And gaze, and worship thee of right declared

Sovran of creatures, universal Dame<sup>1</sup>!

So talked the spirited sly Snake ; and Eve,  
Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied :—

‘Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt  
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved.  
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?  
For many are the trees of God that grow  
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown  
To us ; in such abundance lies our choice 620  
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,  
Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
Grow up to their provision, and more hands  
Help to disburden Nature of her birth<sup>2</sup>.’

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad :—

‘Empress, the way is ready, and not long—  
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,  
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past  
Of blowing myrrh and balm. If thou accept  
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.’ 630

‘Lead, then,’ said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled  
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,  
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy  
Brightens his crest ; as when a wandering fire,  
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night  
Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
Kindled through agitation to a flame  
(Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends),  
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way 640  
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,  
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far :  
So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud  
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the Tree

<sup>1</sup> Sc. ‘Mistress’ (Lat. *domina*).

<sup>2</sup> Sc. ‘produce’.



Of Prohibition, root of all our woe ;  
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake :—

‘Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,  
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,  
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee—  
Wondrous, indeed, if cause of such effects !

650

But of this tree we may not taste nor touch ;  
God so commanded, and left that command  
Sole daughter of his voice : the rest, we live  
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.’

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied :—  
‘Indeed ! Hath God then said that of the fruit  
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,  
Yet lords declared of all in earth or air ?’

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless :—‘Of the fruit  
Of each tree in the Garden we may eat ;  
But of the fruit of this fair tree, amidst  
The Garden, God hath said, “Ye shall not eat  
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.”’

660

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold  
The Tempter, but, with show of zeal and love  
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,  
New part puts on, and, as to passion moved,  
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely, and in act  
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some orator renowned  
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
Flourished, since mute, to some great cause addressed,  
Stood in himself collected, while each part,  
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue  
Sometimes in height began, as no delay  
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right :  
So standing, moving, or to height upgrown,  
The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began :—

670

'O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,  
Mother of science! now I feel thy power 680  
Within me clear, not only to discern  
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways  
Of highest agents, deemed however wise.  
Queen of this Universe, do not believe  
Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die.  
How should ye? By the fruit? it gives you life  
To knowledge. By the Threatener? look on me,  
Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,  
And life more perfect have attained than Fate 690  
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot,  
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the beast  
Is open? or will God incense his ire  
For such a petty trespass, and not praise  
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain  
Of death denounced, whatever thing Death be,  
Deterred not from achieving what might lead  
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil?  
Of good, how just! of evil—if what is evil  
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?  
God, therefore, cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700  
Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:  
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.  
Why, then, was this forbid? Why but to awe?  
Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,  
His worshippers? He knows that in the day  
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,  
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then  
Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,  
Knowing both good and evil as they know.  
That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man, 710  
Internal Man, is but proportion meet;  
I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.

So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off  
Human, to put on Gods—death to be wished,  
Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring !  
And what are Gods that Man may not become  
As they, participating godlike food ?

The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
On our belief, that all from them proceeds.

I question it ; for this fair Earth I see, 720  
Warmed by the Sun, producing every kind ;  
Them nothing. If they all things, who enclosed  
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,  
That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains  
Wisdom without their leave ? and wherein lies  
The offence, that Man should thus attain to know ?  
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
Impart against his will, if all be his ?

Or is it envy ? and can envy dwell  
In heavenly breasts ? These, these and many more 730  
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.  
Goddess humane, reach, then, and freely taste !'

He ended ; and his words, replete with guile,  
Into her heart too easy entrance won.

Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold  
Might tempt alone ; and in her ears the sound  
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd  
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth.  
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked  
An eager appetite, raised by the smell 740

So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,  
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,  
Solicited her longing eye ; yet first,  
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused :—

' Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,  
Though kept from Man, and worthy to be admired,

Whose taste; too long forborne, at first assay  
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise.  
Thy praise he also who forbids thy use 750  
Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree  
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil ;  
Forbids us then to taste. But his forbidding  
Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
By thee communicated, and our want ;  
For good unknown sure is not had, or, had  
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
In plain, then, what forbids he but to know ?  
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise !  
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if Death 760  
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
Our inward freedom ? In the day we eat  
Of this fair fruit, our doom is we shall die !  
How dies the Serpent ? He hath eaten, and lives,  
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,  
Irrational till then. For us alone  
Was death invented ? or to us denied  
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved ?  
For beasts it seems ; yet that one beast which first  
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy 770  
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,  
Friendly to Man, far from deceit or guile.  
What fear I, then ? rather, what know to fear  
Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
Of God or Death, of law or penalty ?  
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,  
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
Of virtue to make wise. What hinders, then,  
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind ?  
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780

Forth-reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat.  
 Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat  
 Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,  
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk  
 The guilty Serpent, and well might, for Eve,  
 Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else  
 Regarded ; such delight till then, as seemed,  
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true  
 Or fancied so through expectation high  
 Of knowledge ; nor was Godhead from her thought. 790  
 Greedily she engorged without restraint,  
 And knew not eating death<sup>1</sup>. Sate at length,  
 And heightened as with wine, jocund and boon<sup>2</sup>,  
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began :—

‘ O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees  
 In Paradise ! of operation blest  
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,  
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end  
 Created ! but henceforth my early care,  
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800  
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease  
 Of thy full branches, offered free to all ;  
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature  
 In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know.  
 Though others envy what they cannot give—  
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here  
 Thus grown ! Experience, next to thee I owe,  
 Best guide : not following thee, I had remained  
 In ignorance ; thou open’st Wisdom’s way,  
 And giv’st access, though secret she retire. 810  
 And I perhaps am secret : Heaven is high—  
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct

<sup>1</sup> Sc. ‘that she was eating death’. One of Milton’s many examples of classical idiom.

<sup>2</sup> Gay.

Each thing on Earth ; and other care perhaps  
May have diverted from continual watch  
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies  
About him. But to Adam in what sort  
Shall I appear ? Shall I to him make known  
As yet my change, and give him to partake  
Full happiness with me, or rather not,  
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820  
Without copartner ? so to add what wants  
In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
And render me more equal, and perhaps—  
A thing not undesirable—sometime  
Superior ; for, inferior, who is free ?  
This may be well ; but what if God have seen,  
And death ensue ? Then I shall be no more ;  
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct !  
A death to think ! Confirmed, then, I resolve 830  
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe.  
So dear I love him that with him all deaths  
I could endure, without him live no life.'

So saying, from the tree her step she turned,  
But first low reverence done, as to the Power  
That dwelt within, whose presence had infused  
Into the plant sciential sap, derived  
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,  
Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn 840  
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,  
As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.  
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new  
Solace in her return, so long delayed ;  
Yet oft his heart, divine <sup>1</sup> of something ill,

<sup>1</sup> Foreboding : cf. divination.

Misgave him. He the faltering measure<sup>1</sup> felt,  
And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
That morn when first they parted. By the Tree  
Of Knowledge he must pass ; there he her met ;  
Scarce from the tree returning ; in her hand 850  
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,  
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.  
To him she hasted ; in her face excuse  
Came prologue, and apology too prompt,  
Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed :—

‘Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay ?  
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived  
Thy presence—agony of love till now  
Not felt, nor shall be twice ; for never more  
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860  
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.  
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree  
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
Opening the way, but of divine effect  
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste ;  
And hath been tasted such. The Serpent wise,  
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,  
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,  
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth 870  
Endued with human voice and human sense,  
Reasoning to admiration, and with me  
Persuasively hath so prevailed that I  
Have also tasted, and have also found  
The effects to correspond—opener mine eyes,  
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,  
And growing up to Godhead ; which for thee  
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.

<sup>1</sup> Heart-beat.

For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss ;  
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon. 880  
Thou, therefore, also taste, that equal lot  
May join us, equal joy, as equal love ;  
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree  
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce  
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit.'

Thus Eve, with countenance blithe, her story told :  
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.  
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard  
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,  
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890  
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.  
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve  
Down dropped, and all the faded roses shed.  
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length  
First to himself he inward silence broke :—

'O fairest of creation, last and best  
Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled  
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,  
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet !  
How art thou lost ! how on a sudden lost, 900  
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote !  
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress  
The strict forbiddance, how to violate  
The sacred fruit forbidden ? Some cursed fraud  
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,  
And me with thee hath ruined ; for with thee  
Certain my resolution is to die.  
How can I live without thee ? how forgo  
Thy sweet converse and love so dearly joined,  
To live again in these wild woods forlorn ? 910  
Should God create another Eve, and I  
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee



Would never from my heart. No, no ! I feel  
 The link of nature draw me : flesh of flesh,  
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.'

So having said, as one from sad dismay  
 Recomforted, and, after thoughts disturbed,  
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,

Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned :— 920

'Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,

And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared

Had it been only coveting to eye

That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence ;

Much more to taste it, under ban to touch.

But past who can recall, or done undo ?

Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate ! Yet so

Perhaps thou shalt not die ; perhaps the fact

Is not so heinous now—foretasted fruit,

Profaned first by the Serpent, by him first 930

Made common and unhallowed ere our taste,

Nor yet on him found deadly. He yet lives—

Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,

Higher degree of life : inducement strong

To us, as likely, tasting, to attain

Proportional ascent ; which cannot be

But to be but Gods, or Angels, demi-gods.

Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,

Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy

Us, his prime creatures, dignified so high 940

Set over all His works ; which, in our fall,

For us created, needs with us must fail,

Dependent made. So God shall uncreate,

Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose—

Not well conceived of God ; who, though His power

Creation could repeat, yet would be loth

Us to abolish, lest the Adversary  
Triumph and say : " Fickle their state whom God  
Most favours ; who can please Him long ? Me first  
He ruined, now Mankind ; whom will He next ?"— 950  
Matter of scorn not to be given the Foe.  
However, I with thee have fixed my lot,  
Certain to undergo like doom. If death  
Consort with thee, death is to me as life ;  
So forcible within my heart I feel  
The bond of Nature draw me to my own ;  
My own in thee ; for what thou art is mine.  
Our state cannot be severed ; we are one,  
One flesh ; to lose thee were to lose myself.'

So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied :— 960  
' O glorious trial of exceeding love,  
Illustrious evidence, example high !  
Engaging me to emulate ; but, short  
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,  
Adam ? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,  
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,  
One heart, one soul in both ; whereof good proof  
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,  
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,  
Shall separate us, linked in love so dear, 970  
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,  
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit ;  
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,  
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented  
This happy trial of thy love, which else  
So eminently never had been known.  
Were it I thought death menaced would ensue  
This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
The worst, and not persuade thee—rather die  
Deserted than oblige thee with a fact 980

Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assured  
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
 So faithful, love unequalled. But I feel  
 Far otherwise the event—not death, but life  
 Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,  
 Taste so divine that what of sweet before  
 Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this and harsh.  
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,  
 And fear of death deliver to the winds.'

So saying, she embraced him, and for joy 990  
 Tenderly wept, much won that he his love  
 Had so ennobled as of choice to incur  
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.  
 In recompense (for such compliance bad  
 Such recompense best merits), from the bough  
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit  
 With liberal hand. He scrupled not to eat,  
 Against his better knowledge, not deceived,  
 But fondly overcome with female charm.  
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000  
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan ;  
 Sky louded, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin  
 Original ; while Adam took no thought,  
 Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate  
 Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe  
 Him with her loved society ; that now,  
 As with new wine intoxicated both,  
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
 Divinity within them breeding wings 1010  
 Wherewith to scorn the Earth.

Adam and Eve realize the nature of their transgression, and,  
 at the first outburst of grief and shame, incriminate each other.  
 Adam speaks :—

‘Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and stayed  
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,  
I know not whence possessed thee! we had then  
Remained still happy, not, as now, despoiled  
Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable!  
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve 1140  
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.’

To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve:—  
‘What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe?  
Imput’st thou that to my default, or wilt  
Of wandering, as thou call’st it, which who knows  
But might as ill have happened thou being by,  
Or to thyself perhaps? hadst thou been there,  
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned  
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150  
No ground of enmity between us known,  
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.  
Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
As good have grown there still, a lifeless rib.  
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,  
Command me absolutely not to go,  
Going into such danger, as thou said’st?  
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay,  
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent, 1160  
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me.’

To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:—  
‘Is this the love, is this the recompense  
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed  
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I—  
Who might have lived, and joyed immortal bliss,  
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?

And am I now upbraided as the cause  
 Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,  
 It seems, in thy restraint! What could I more? 1170  
 I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold  
 The danger, and the lurking enemy  
 That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,  
 And force upon free will hath here no place.  
 But confidence then bore thee on, secure  
 Either to meet no danger, or to find  
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps  
 I also erred in overmuch admiring  
 What seemed in thee so perfect that I thought  
 No evil durst attempt thee. But I rue 1180  
 That error now, which is become my crime,  
 And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall  
 Him who, to worth in women overtrusting,  
 Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;  
 And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,  
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse.  
 Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;  
 And of their vain contest appeared no end.

### ON HIS BLINDNESS

#### I. SONNET

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,  
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,  
 And that one talent which is death to hide  
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
 My true account, lest He returning chide,  
 'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?'  
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
 That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need

Either man's work, or his own gifts. Who best      10  
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
 Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed  
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;  
 They also serve who only stand and wait.'

## II. PARADISE LOST, BOOK III

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!  
 Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam.  
 May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,  
 And never but in unapproached light  
 Dwelt in eternity—dwelt then in thee,  
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
 Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the Sun,  
 Before the Heavens, thou wert, and at the voice  
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest      10  
 The rising World of waters dark and deep,  
 Won from the void and formless Infinite!  
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,  
 Escaped the Stygian Pool,<sup>1</sup> though long detained  
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
 Through utter and through middle Darkness borne,  
 With other notes than to the Orphean lyre  
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,  
 Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,      20  
 Though hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
 So thick a drop serene<sup>2</sup> hath quenched their orbs,

<sup>1</sup> Styx was the river of the lower world.

<sup>2</sup> The disease which caused Milton's blindness was called 'Gutta serena'.

Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, 30  
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
Those other two equalled with me in fate,  
So were I equalled with them in renown,  
Blind Thamyris<sup>1</sup> and blind Maeonides<sup>2</sup>,  
And Tiresias<sup>3</sup> and Phineus<sup>4</sup>, prophets old:  
Then feed on thoughts that voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,  
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40  
Seasons return; but not to me returns  
Day or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But clouds instead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
Presented with a universal blank  
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50  
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
Irradiate; there plant eyes; all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

<sup>1</sup> A blind Thracian poet: see Propert. ii. 22. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Homer was said to have been born in Maeonia (sc. Lydia).

<sup>3</sup> The blind prophet of Thebes. Ovid, *Met.* iii. 323.

<sup>4</sup> A blind prophet-king of Thrace. Ovid, *Met.* vii. 8.

## III. SAMSON AGONISTES

. . . . . But chief of all,  
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain !  
 Blind among enemies ! O worse than chains,  
 Dungeon or beggary, or decrepit age !  
 Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct, 70  
 And all her various objects of delight  
 Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased.  
 Inferior to the vilest now become  
 Of man or worm, the vilest now exeel me :  
 They creep, yet see ; I, dark in light, exposed  
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,  
 Within doors or without, still as a fool,  
 In power of others, never in my own—  
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon, 80  
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse  
 Without all hope of day !  
 O first-created beam, and thou great Word ;  
 ‘ Let there be light, and light was over all,’  
 Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree ?  
 The Sun to me is dark  
 And silent as the Moon,  
 When she deserts the night,  
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.  
 Since light so necessary is to life, 90  
 And almost life itself ; if it be true  
 That light is in the soul,  
 She all in every part, why was the sight  
 To such a tender ball as the eye confined,  
 So obvious and so easy to be quenched,  
 And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused.  
 That she might look at will through every pore ?



Then had I not been thus exiled from light ;  
As in the land of darkness, yet in light  
To live a life half dead, a living death,  
And buried ; but, O yet more miserable !  
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave ;  
Buried, yet not exempt  
By privilege of death and burial  
From worst of other evils, pains, and wrongs ;  
But made hereby obnoxious more  
To all the miseries of life,  
Life in captivity  
Among inhuman foes.

## CHAPTER III

### PROSE WRITERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THE seventeenth century was, in England, a great period of classical learning. At no time was the level of scholarship higher in our Universities; at no time were men of letters more familiar with the poets and historians of the ancient world. Dryden knows the Greek tragedians almost as well as the French; Cowley quotes from Varro and Columella as if they lay on every man's writing table; and if this were the practice in Court and Coffee-house, still more did it prevail among those with whom learning was a passion. There are pages of Burton's *Anatomy* which are piled at random with English and Latin phrases—the writer seems hardly to know which is uppermost; there are pages of Sir Thomas Browne in which the languages have been fused into a sort of Corinthian metal; not Greek or Latin or English, but a chemical compound of all three. That 'there was no sarcophagy<sup>1</sup> before the Flood'; that 'stags' horns are alexipharmacous<sup>2</sup>', these instances are strange enough, but they pale before the sentence which tells us that 'the offices of Jupiter's trisulk<sup>3</sup> are to burn, discuss<sup>4</sup>, and terebrate<sup>5</sup>'.

It is impossible to imagine what would have happened to English prose if it had continued along this line of development. But meanwhile,

<sup>1</sup> Eating meat.

<sup>2</sup> Three-forked lightning.

<sup>3</sup> Protective against poison.

<sup>4</sup> Scatter.

<sup>5</sup> Pierce. There is no need to add that the structure of Browne's prose, as in the example given below, is of great strength and dignity. In his own kind he is a classic.

from the very homes and strongholds of learning, had been wrought a work which not only turned scholarship to incomparably finer account, but set the English language on a four-square monument for all time. This was the Authorized Version of the Bible, translated, between 1607 and 1611, by three committees at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster. The names of the translators, though preserved to us, are with hardly an exception obscure and unfamiliar: in an age of great divines they made little or no personal mark; their one supreme achievement finished, they laid their pens aside and returned to the customary routine of study or administration. But the effect of their work was in less than a generation clearly apparent; it influenced the style of Walton and formed that of Bunyan, it reappeared in varying degree through the writings of Fuller and Jeremy Taylor, of Bacon and Traherne; it exercised in almost every province of thought a sway nearly as potent as that of Luther's Bible over the language and literature of Germany.

Beside these, and affected in due measure by both, there was steadily growing and developing the prose of common speech—that clear lucid expression, in everyday language, of the plain fact at issue, which forms the texture of Tillotson and Dryden, of Clarendon's *History*, and of Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*. It has some of the qualities of the best French prose—of Voltaire for instance—it is almost wholly free from ornament, it follows rather than leads the accepted language of the time, it never distracts the reader from its point or leaves him in doubt as to its meaning. If the aim of style be 'to say what you have to say as simply as possible', that is an aim which generation by generation it has successively achieved: in Swift, in Defoe, in Goldsmith, in Hazlitt we may trace the line of inheritance which lives on its own means and neither

envies nor seeks to rival the gold and jewellery of its more sumptuous neighbours.

Two more general points may briefly be noted. First, the width of range covered by the topics of seventeenth-century prose. Browne, like Pepys, is interested in everything under the sun; Burton reads every book in the library and stores his mind with a miscellaneous treasury of anecdotes and illustrations; Walton's *Complete Angler* includes acoustical experiments from Bacon and verses from Waller in praise of music, and a hymn of George Herbert, which is most in place of them all. Secondly, the age contributed in more than one way to the later development of the English novel. It had a keen eye for picturesque detail: witness the descriptions in Fuller's *Holy War*, and in both the principal allegories of Bunyan; it was fond of analysing character from the fictions of Earle to the biographies of Walton and the historical portraits of Clarendon; the diarists, and not these alone, are occupied in a spirited and vivacious reflection of ordinary life. The time has not yet come for *Captain Singleton* and *Tom Jones*, but there is already a premonition of their appearance.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE (1605-1682), educated at Broadgates Hall, Oxford, was a noted physician of Norwich. His best known work, the *Religio Medici*, was written probably in 1635, though it was not published until 1642. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Browne's sympathies were wholly with the Royalists, but he took no active part in the struggle. In 1646 appeared '*Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, or Enquiries into very many received tenets and commonly presumed truths which examined prove but Vulgar and Common Errors'. In 1658 came '*Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial*'; or a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk'; and *The Garden of Cyrus*, an account of horticulture from the earliest times, with a disquisition on the mystic properties of the number five. Browne was knighted by Charles II when the king visited Norwich in 1671. Various miscellaneous

tracts and letters were published after his death, of which the most important is the collection of maxims known as *Christian Morals*.

## RELIGIO MEDICI

## PART II, SECT. I

Now for that other virtue of Charity, without which faith is a mere notion and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of Charity. And, if I hold the true anatomy of myself<sup>1</sup>, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue, for I am of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things. I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but being amongst them make them my common viands, and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a churchyard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others; those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but, where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate<sup>2</sup>, but seem for to be framed and constellated unto all. I am

<sup>1</sup> i. e. if I can truly analyse my own feelings.

<sup>2</sup> The earth was divided into seven zones or 'climates', each of which was under one of the 'seven planets'. Browne means that he does not belong to any one climate in particular.

no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country: I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing: my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence but the devil, or so at least abhor anything but that we might come to composition<sup>1</sup>. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude—that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than hydra. It is no breach of Charity to call these *fools*; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical Scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of *Multitude* do I only include the base and minor sort of people; there is a rabble even amongst the gentry, a sort of Plebeian heads whose fancy moves with the same wheel as these, men in the same level with mechanics, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But as in casting account three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant *dorados*<sup>2</sup> of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the

<sup>1</sup> 'Agreement'.

<sup>2</sup> 'Gilded ones'.

quality of his desert, and pre-eminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times and the bias of present practice wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well-ordered polities, till corruption getteth ground, ruder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations contemn—every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a licence or faculty to do or purchase anything.

THOMAS FULLER (1608-1661) was perpetual curate of St. Benet's, Cambridge. His first poem, *David's Hainous Sinne, Heartie Repentance, Heavie Punishment*, was published in 1631. The influence of his uncle, Bishop Davenant, obtained him speedy promotion, and he became prebend of Salisbury and rector of Broadwindsor in Dorsetshire. In 1639 appeared *The History of the Holy Warre*, an account of the Crusades. This was followed in 1641 by *The Holy and Profane State*, which was at one time attributed to Nicholas Ferrar. He was deprived of his living under the Commonwealth, but in 1644 was appointed chaplain to the baby Princess, Henrietta. In 1646 he published his *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*. For some time he had been working at his *Worthies*, and also at a *Church History*, which appeared in 1655. The *Worthies* appeared posthumously. Fuller also produced a certain amount of inferior verse, a large number of sermons, and a few political works, including *Andronicus, or the Unfortunate Politician*, which ran through three editions.

## THE HOLY WAR

### BOOK I, CHAPTER XVII

ANTIOCHIA, thus taken, was offered to Alexius the Emperor; but he refused it, suspecting some deceit in the tender; as bad men measure other men's minds by the crooked rule of their own. Hereupon it was bestowed on Boemund; though this place, dearly purchased, was

not long quietly possessed: for Corboran, the Turkish general, came with a vast army of Persian forces, and besieged the Christians in the city, so that they were brought into so great strait betwixt death and death, hunger within and foes without. Many stole secretly away, whereat the rest were no whit discomfited, counting the loss of cowards to be gain to an army. At last, they generally resolved rather to lose their lives by wholesale on the point of the sword than to retail them out by famine, which is the worst of tyrants, and murdereth men in state whilst they die in not dying. It did not a little encourage them that they found in the Church of St. Peter that lance wherewith our Saviour's body was pierced. They highly prized this military relic of Christ, as if by wounding of Him it had got virtue to wound His enemies, and counted it a pawn of certain victory. Whether this spear was truly found, or whether it was but invented to cozen men with, we will not dispute: however, it wrought much with these pilgrims, for conceit<sup>1</sup> oftentimes doth things above conceit, especially when the imagination apprehendeth something founded in religion. Marching forth in several armies, they manfully fell upon their enemies, and being armed with despair to escape, they sought to sell their lives at the dearest rate. Valour doth swell when it is crushed betwixt extremities, and then oftentimes goeth beyond herself in her achievements. This day, by God's blessing on their courage, they got a noble conquest. Some saw St. George in the air with an army of white horses fighting for them; but these, no doubt, did look through the spectacles of fancy. And yet, though we should reject this apparition we need not play the Origens with the story of St. George, and change all the literal sense into an allegory of Christ and His Church:

<sup>1</sup> i. e. belief.



for it is improbable that our English nation amongst so many saints that were would choose one that was not to be their patron—especially seeing the world in that age had rather a glut than a famine of saints.

IZAAK WALTON (1593-1683), born at Stafford, settled early in London as a haberdasher, and was there intimate with Donne, Hales, Wotton, Ben Jonson, and other literary men of the day. In 1640 he wrote his *Life of Donne* as preface to a volume of Donne's sermons, which was about to be published. It was followed in 1651 by the *Life of Sir Henry Wotton*. He was early noted as a fisherman, but the *Complete Angler* was not written until 1653. In 1665 appeared his *Life of Richard Hooker*, and in 1670 the *Life of George Herbert*. In the same year the four 'Lives' were collected in one volume. He died at Winchester and was buried in the Cathedral.

## THE COMPLETE ANGLER

### PART I, CHAPTER IV

BUT turn out of the way a little, good scholar, towards yonder high hedge: we will sit whilst this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn the verdant meadows.

Look, under that broad beech-tree I sat down when I was last this way a-fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow cave near to the brow of that primrose-hill. There I sat, viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea, yet sometimes opposed by rugged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves and turned them into foam: and sometimes viewing the harmless lambs, some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the

cheerful sun, and others were craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As thus I sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul that I thought—as the poet has happily expressed it—

I was for that time lifted above earth ;  
And possessed joys not promised in my birth,

As I left this place, and entered into the next field, a second pleasure entertained me ; 'twas a handsome milkmaid that had cast away all care, and sung like a nightingale. Her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it ; 'twas that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlow, now at least fifty years ago ; and the milkmaid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618–1667). For biographical details see Chapter I, p. 24.

(From the Essay)

## OF AGRICULTURE

THE antiquity of his art is certainly not to be contested by any other. The three first men in the world, were a gardener, a ploughman, and a grazier, and if any man object, that the second of these was a murderer, I desire he would consider, that as soon as he was so, he quitted our profession and turned builder. It is for this reason, I suppose, that Ecclesiasticus forbids us to hate husbandry ; because (says he) the Most High has created it. We were all born to this art, and taught by nature to nourish our bodies by the same earth, out of which they were made, and to which they must return, and pay at last for their sustenance.

Behold the original and primitive nobility of all those great persons, who are too proud now, not only to till

the ground, but almost to tread upon it. We may talk what we please of lilies, and lions rampant, and spread eagles in fields d'or, or d'argent, but if heraldry were guided by reason, a plough in a field arable, would be the most noble and ancient arms.

All these considerations make me fall into the wonder and complaint of Columella<sup>1</sup>. How it should come to pass that all arts or sciences, (for the dispute, which is an art, and which is a science, does not belong to the curiosity of us husbandmen) metaphysic, physic, morality, mathematics, logic, rhetoric, &c. which are all, I grant, good and useful faculties, (except only metaphysic, which I do not know whether it be any thing or no) but even vaulting, fencing, dancing, attiring, cookery, carving, and such like vanities, should all have public schools and masters, and yet that we should never see or hear of any man who took upon him the profession of teaching this so pleasant, so virtuous, so profitable, so honourable, so necessary art?

A man would think, when he's in serious humour, that it were but a vain irrational, and ridiculous thing, for a great company of men and women to run up and down in a room together, in a hundred several postures and figures to no purpose, and with no design; and therefore dancing was invented first, and only practised anciently in the ceremonies, of the heathen religion, which consisted all in mummerly and madness; the latter being the chief glory of the worship, and accounted divine inspiration: this, I say, a severe man would think, though I dare not determine so far against so customary a part now of good breeding. And yet, who is there among our gentry, that does not entertain a dancing-

<sup>1</sup> First century A. D. A well-known writer on husbandry.

master for his children as soon as they are able to walk? But did ever any father provide a tutor for his son to instruct him betimes in the nature and improvements of that land which he intended to leave him? That is at least a superfluity, and this a defect in our manner of education; and therefore I could wish (but cannot in these times much hope to see it) that one college in each university were erected and appropriated to this study, as well as there are to medicine and the civil law: there would be no need of making a body of scholars and fellows, with certain endowments, as in other colleges; it would suffice, if after the manner of halls in Oxford, there were only four Professors constituted (for it would be too much work for only one master, or principal, as they call him there) to teach these four parts of it. First, aration, and all things relating to it. Secondly, pasturage. Thirdly, gardens, orchards, vineyards, and woods. Fourthly, all parts of rural economy, which would contain the government of bees, swine, poultry, decoys, ponds, &c. and all that which Varro<sup>1</sup> calls *Villaticas Pastiones*<sup>2</sup>, together with the sports of the field, which ought to be looked upon not only as pleasures, but as parts of housekeeping and the domestical conservation and uses of all that is brought in by industry abroad. The business of these professors should not be, as is commonly practised in other arts, only to read pompous and superficial lectures out of Virgil's *Georgics*<sup>3</sup>, Pliny<sup>4</sup>, Varro, or Columella, but to instruct their pupils in the whole method and course of this study, which might be

<sup>1</sup> First century B. C. Predecessor and model of Columella.

<sup>2</sup> The keeping of live-stock round the house (e.g. poultry, pigeons, &c.).

<sup>3</sup> Virgil's four poems on husbandry.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny the elder, first century A. D., author of a famous work on Natural History.

run through perhaps with diligence in a year or two, and the continual succession of scholars upon a moderate taxation for their diet, lodging, and learning, would be a sufficient constant revenue for maintenance of the house and the professors, who should be men not chosen for the ostentation of critical literature, but for solid and experimental knowledge of the things they teach such men ; so industrious, and public-spirited as I conceive Mr. Hartlib<sup>1</sup> to be, if the gentleman be yet alive : but it is needless to speak farther of my thoughts of this design, unless the present disposition of the age allowed more probability of bringing it into execution. What I have further to say of the country life, shall be borrowed from the poets, who were always the most faithful and affectionate friends to it. Poetry was born among the shepherds.

*Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine Musas  
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui.*

The Muses still love their own native place,  
'T has secret charms which nothing can deface.

The truth is, no other place is proper for their work ; one might as well undertake to dance in a crowd, as to make good verses in the midst of noise and tumult.

As well might corn, as verse in cities grow,  
In vain the thankless glebe we plough and sow,  
Against th'unnatural soil in vain we strive ;  
'Tis not a ground in which these plants will thrive.

JOHN BUNYAN (1628-1688) was the son of a whitesmith or tinker, and was bred to his father's trade. He fought in the Civil War, probably on the Parliamentary side. About 1648 he married and returned to his native village of Elstow. To his wife Bunyan seems to have owed his awakening to spiritual matters,

<sup>1</sup> Friend of Milton : voluminous writer both on Education and on Agriculture.

and gradually he abandoned dancing and rural sports, of which he was extremely fond, and gave himself up to a life of devotion. In 1653, after some years of intense struggle, he joined the Nonconformists. His experiences at this time are described in his *Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. He became a preacher, and soon attracted large crowds, to whom he spoke 'in woods, in barns, on village greens, or in town chapels'. After the Restoration he was arrested, and on his refusal to cease from preaching he was committed to the county jail. Here—with one brief interval in 1666—he remained for the next twelve years, obstinately refusing to accept any compromise. He spent his time in prison in making laces, in teaching and exhorting his fellow prisoners, and in writing numerous books and tracts in prose and verse. *The Pilgrim's Progress* was composed at this time, though no complete edition was published till 1679. In 1672 he was released and obtained a licence to preach. He continued to pour forth religious tracts. *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* appeared in 1680, and *The Holy War* in 1682, and besides these he produced a mass of controversial works. He died just before the Revolution.

## THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Christian meets Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation.

THEN Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way, and said 'I am void of fear in this matter, prepare thyself to die, for I swear by my infernal den that thou shalt go no further, here will I spill thy soul'; and with that, he threw a flaming dart at his breast, but Christian had a shield in his hand, with which he caught it, and so prevented the danger of that. Then did Christian draw, for he saw 'twas time to bestir him; and Apollyon as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that Christian could do to avoid it, Apollyon wounded him in his head, his hand and foot; this made Christian give a little back: Apollyon therefore followed his work amain,

and Christian again took courage, and resisted as manfully as he could. This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till Christian was almost quite spent. For you must know that Christian by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker.

Then Apollyon espying his opportunity, began to gather up close to Christian, and wrestling with him, gave him a dreadful fall; and with that Christian's sword flew out of his hand. Then said Apollyon, 'I am sure of thee now'; and with that, he had almost pressed him to death, so that Christian began to despair of life. But as God would have it, while Apollyon was fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, Christian nimbly reached out his hand for his sword, and caught it, saying, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! when I fall, I shall arise'; and with that, gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back, as one that had received his mortal wound: Christian perceiving that, made at him again, saying, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.' And with that, Apollyon spread forth his dragon's wings, and sped him away, that Christian saw him no more.

In this combat no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard as I did, what yelling, and hideous roaring Apollyon made all the time of the fight, he spake like a dragon: and on the other side, what sighs and groans brast from Christian's heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two edged sword, then indeed he did smile, and look upward: but 'twas the dreadfullest sight that ever I saw.

So when the battle was over, Christian said, 'I will here give thanks to Him that hath delivered me out of

the mouth of the lion ; to him that did help me against Apollyon ' : and so he did, saying,

' Great Beelzebub, the captain of this fiend,  
Designed my ruin ; therefore to this end  
He sent him harnessed out, and he with rage  
That hellish was, did fiercely me engage :  
But blessed Michael helped me, and I,  
By dint of sword, did quickly make him fly :  
Therefore to him let me give lasting praise,  
And thank and bless his holy name always.'

Then there came to him an hand, with some of the leaves of the tree of life, the which Christian took, and applied to the wounds that he had received in the battle, and was healed immediately. He also sat down in that place to eat bread, and to drink of the bottle that was given him a little before ; so being refreshed, he addressed himself to his journey, with his sword drawn in his hand, for he said, ' I know not but some other enemy may be at hand.' But he met with no other affront from Apollyon, quite through this valley.

Now at the end of this valley was another, called the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and Christian must needs go through it, because the way to the Celestial City lay through the midst of it. Now this valley is a very solitary place. The prophet Jeremiah thus describes it, ' a wilderness, a land of desarts, and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, a land that no man (but a Christian) passeth through, and where no man dwelt.'

EDWARD HYDE, Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674), was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and began his political career in 1640. He took a prominent part in the impeachment of Strafford, but during the war joined himself to the king's party. He received rapid promotion, though he and the queen rarely advocated the same policy. In 1645 Hyde was sent into the West



in charge of the Prince of Wales. Driven from place to place, they took refuge first at Scilly and then in Jersey. While at Scilly (1646) Hyde began his *History of the Rebellion*, which he afterwards altered and adapted at various times, and which was finally combined with his autobiography in 1671, and was first published in 1702-4. He was Charles II's most trusted adviser in France, and was formally declared Lord Chancellor in 1658. After the Restoration he became virtual head of the government, being created Earl of Clarendon at the coronation. In September, 1660, came the discovery of the secret marriage between the king's brother, James, and Anne Hyde, Clarendon's daughter. Later he fell into disgrace owing to his disagreement with the policy of Charles. He was dismissed from the Chancellorship (1667) and impeached. He fled to France, and the remainder of his life was spent in exile. Besides the *History* Clarendon produced a vast mass of state papers, speeches, letters, and pamphlets.

## ESCAPE OF CHARLES II

### FROM THE HISTORY OF THE REBELLION, BOOK XIII

MR. LANE had a niece, or very near kinswoman, who was married to a gentleman, one Mr. Norton, a person of eight or nine hundred pounds per annum, who lived within four or five miles of Bristol, which was at least four or five days' journey from the place where the King then was, but a place most to be wished for the King to be in, because he did not only know all that country very well, but knew many persons also, to whom, in an extraordinary case, he durst make himself known. It was hereupon resolved, that Mrs. Lane should visit this cousin, who was known to be of good affections; and that she should ride behind the King, who was fitted with clothes and boots for such a service; and that a servant of her father's, in his livery, should wait upon her. A good house was easily pitched upon for the first night's lodging; where Wilmot had notice given him to

meet. And in this equipage the King began his journey; the colonel keeping him company at a distance, with a hawk upon his fist, and two or three spaniels; which, where there were any fields at hand, warranted him to ride out of the way, keeping his company still in his eye, and not seeming to be of it. In this manner they came to their first night's lodging; and they need not now contrive to come to their journey's end about the close of the evening, for it was in the month of October far advanced, that the long journeys they made could not be dispatched sooner. Here the Lord Wilmot found them; and their journeys being then adjusted, he was instructed where he should be every night: so they were seldom seen together in the journey, and rarely lodged in the same house at night. In this manner the colonel hawked two or three days, till he had brought them within less than a day's journey of Mr. Norton's house; and then he gave his hawk to the Lord Wilmot; who continued the journey in the same exercise.

There was great care taken when they came to any house, that the King might be presently carried into some chamber; Mrs. Lane declaring, 'that he was a neighbour's son, whom his father had lent her to ride before her, in hope that he would the sooner recover from a quartan ague, with which he had been miserably afflicted, and was not yet free.' And by this artifice she caused a good bed to be still provided for him, and the best meat to be sent; which she often carried herself, to hinder others from doing it. There was no resting in any place till they came to Mr. Norton's, nor any thing extraordinary that happened in the way, save that they met many people every day in the way, who were very well known to the King; and the day that they went to Mr. Norton's, they were necessarily to ride quite through

the city of Bristol ; a place, and people, the King had been so well acquainted with, that he could not but send his eyes abroad to view the great alterations which had been made there, after his departure from thence : and when he rode near the place where the great fort had stood, he could not forbear putting his horse out of the way, and rode with his mistress behind him round about it.

They came to Mr. Norton's house sooner than usual, and it being on a holiday, they saw many people about a bowling-green that was before the door ; and the first man the King saw was a chaplain of his own, who was allied to the gentleman of the house, and was sitting upon the rails to see how the bowlers played. William, by which name the King went, walked with his horse into the stable, until his mistress could provide for his retreat. Mrs. Lane was very welcome to her cousin, and was presently conducted to her chamber ; where she no sooner was, than she lamented the condition of ' a good youth, who came with her, and whom she had borrowed of his father to ride before her, who was very sick, being newly recovered of an ague ' ; and desired her cousin, ' that a chamber might be provided for him, and a good fire made : for that he would go early to bed, and was not fit to be below stairs.' A pretty little chamber was presently made ready, and a fire prepared, and a boy sent into the stable to call William, and to show him his chamber ; who was very glad to be there, freed from so much company as was below. Mrs. Lane was put to find some excuse for making a visit at that time of the year, and so many days' journey from her father, and where she had never been before, though the mistress of the house and she had been bred together, and friends as well as kindred. She pretended, ' that she was, after a little rest, to go into Dorsetshire to another friend.'

When it was supper-time, there being broth brought to the table, Mrs. Lane filled a little dish, and desired the butler, who waited at the table, 'to carry that dish of porridge to William, and to tell him that he should have some meat sent to him presently.' The butler carried the porridge into the chamber, with a napkin, and spoon, and bread, and spoke kindly to the young man; who was willing to be eating.

The butler, looking narrowly upon him, fell upon his knees, and with tears told him, 'he was glad to see His Majesty.' The King was infinitely surprised, yet recollected himself enough to laugh at the man, and to ask him, 'what he meant?' The man had been falconer to Sir Thomas Jermyn, and made it appear that he knew well enough to whom he spoke, repeating some particulars, which the King had not forgot. Whereupon the King conjured him 'not to speak of what he knew, so much as to his master, though he believed him a very honest man'. The fellow promised, and faithfully kept his word; and the King was the better waited upon during the time of his abode there.

Dr. Georges, the King's chaplain, being a gentleman of a good family near that place, and allied to Mr. Norton, supped with them; and, being a man of a cheerful conversation, asked Mrs. Lane many questions concerning William, of whom he saw she was so careful by sending up meat to him, 'how long his ague had been gone? and whether he had purged since it left him?' and the like; to which she gave such answers as occurred. The doctor, from the final prevalence of the parliament, had, as many others of that function had done, declined his profession, and pretended to study physic. As soon as supper was done, out of good nature, and without telling anybody, he went to see William. The King saw him coming

into the chamber, and withdrew to the inside of the bed, that he might be farthest from the candle; and the doctor came, and sat down by him, felt his pulse, and asked him many questions, which he answered in as few words as was possible, and expressing great inclination to go to his bed; to which the doctor left him, and went to Mrs. Lane, and told her, 'that he had been with William, and that he would do well;' and advised her what she should do if his ague returned. The next morning the doctor went away, so that the King saw him no more, of which he was right glad. The next day the Lord Wilmot came to the house with his hawk, to see Mrs. Lane, and so conferred with William; who was to consider what he was to do. They thought it necessary to rest some days, till they were informed what port lay most convenient for them, and what person lived nearest to it, upon whose fidelity they might rely: and the King gave him directions to inquire after some persons, and some other particulars, of which when he should be fully instructed, he should return again to him. In the meantime Wilmot lodged at a house not far from Mr. Norton's, to which he had been recommended.

After some days' stay here, and communication between the King and the Lord Wilmot by letters, the King came to know that Colonel Francis Windham lived within little more than a day's journey of the place where he was; of which he was very glad; for besides the inclination he had to his eldest brother, whose wife had been his nurse, this gentleman had behaved himself very well during the war, and had been governor of Dunstar castle, where the King had lodged when he was in the west. After the end of the war, and when all other places were surrendered in that county, he likewise surrendered that, upon fair conditions, and made his peace, and afterwards

married a wife with a competent fortune, and lived quietly, without any suspicion of having lessened his affection towards the King.

The King sent Wilmot to him, and acquainted him where he was, and 'that he would gladly speak with him'. It was not hard for him to choose a good place where to meet, and thereupon the day was appointed. After the King had taken his leave of Mrs. Lane, who remained with her cousin Norton, the King, and the Lord Wilmot, met the colonel; and, in the way, he encountered in a town, through which they passed, Mr. Kirton, a servant of the King's, who well knew the Lord Wilmot, who had no other disguise than the hawk, but took no notice of him, nor suspected the King to be there; yet that day made the King more wary of having him in his company upon the way. At the place of meeting they rested only one night, and then the King went to the colonel's house; where he rested many days, whilst the colonel projected at what place the King might embark, and how they might procure a vessel to be ready there; which was not easy to find; there being so great caution in all the ports, and so great a fear possessing those who were honest, that it was hard to procure any vessel that was outward bound to take in any passenger.

THOMAS TRAHERNE (see Chapter I, p. 31). Traherne describes the world as it first appeared to him when he was a child.

## CENTURIES OF MEDITATIONS

### III

THE corn was orient and immortal wheat which never should be reaped nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates

were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me ; their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The men ! oh, what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem ! Immortal cherubims ! And young men glittering and sparkling angels ! and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty ! Boys and girls tumbling in the street were moving jewels : I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the light of the day, and something infinite behind everything appeared, which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes, and gold and silver were mine as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins, and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine ; and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties nor bounds nor divisions ; but all proprieties and divisions were mine, all treasures and the possessors of them. So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the dirty devices of this world—which I now unlearn, and become, as it were—a little child again, that I may enter into the Kingdom of God

## CHAPTER IV

### DRYDEN

IN the army of letters John Dryden takes rank as a brilliant and successful soldier of fortune. When in 1657 he left Cambridge and went up to London he was frankly intent on making a career, and, if we may judge by events, little concerned whether it were Trojan or Tyrian, Cavalier or Roundhead, under whose colours he enlisted. His first considerable poem was an elegy on Cromwell, his next a panegyric on Charles II: brought up in a Puritan household, he soon became the most audacious of Restoration dramatists; a master of fence, he cut his way by sheer swordsmanship to the Laureate's office, and held it at the rapier's point against all comers. Buckingham attacked him, and the answer was the portrait of Zimri. Shadwell attacked him, and the answer was Mac Flecknoe. Rochester supported Elkanah Settle, and he crippled patron and protégé with one disdainful thrust. For nearly thirty years his chair at Wills's coffee-house was a dictator's throne, where wits and scholars crowded to pay him court, and where his lightest word could make or destroy a reputation.

Macaulay accounts for his influence upon the age by saying that there was no one on whom the age exercised so great an influence: but this, though true, is only a part of the truth. The fact is that he united two types of character which are hardly ever seen in combination. In the first place he was a true genius—far greater than Boileau, with whom he is often compared—he had wit and oratory and a luminous good sense; he had a faultless ear and



an unerring use of words; he mastered the heroic couplet as no man ever mastered it before or after him; his prose is of that highest art in which all art is concealed. In the second place—and it is here that the influence of his age is apparent—he was a born campaigner, quick to seize any vantage ground that occasion offered, and to use any tactics that were sanctioned by the laws of war. And these two sides reacted and alternated in the strangest manner throughout his career. In some points his conscience seems to have been as flexible as the patriotism of Captain Dugald Dalgetty: in others it was as rigorous as the justice of Cato the Censor. The Court wanted licentious comedies, and he wrote examples that are worse than Wycherley. It wanted sentimental tragedies, and he gave it the *Conquest of Granada* and the *Indian Emperor*. It wanted libretti for the composers of the Chapel Royal, and he carved it an opera out of *Paradise Lost*. Yet in all questions of literary form and method he was the most fearless and upright of controversialists; and, at a time when he needed friends, quarrelled with the most powerful of those that he possessed rather than surrender his doctrine of the pre-eminence of rhyme.

His chief strength lay in satire and in criticism. The former of these had already become a literary fashion: Donne was a mighty satirist, Cowley had a neat hand, and Cleveland a bitter tongue: Butler's *Hudibras*, which we now read in forlorn astonishment, so hit the taste of the town that it came near to winning its author the Laureateship. But above all these, as above all his rivals and opponents, Dryden rises supreme. His satire is strong, masculine, dignified: it neither scolds nor blusters, it cuts a clean stroke without venom and without malignity. If it is sometimes coarse it is far less so than the practice of the time admitted; it fights not like

a bravo but like a soldier, who in the midst of conflict has at heart the honour of his profession.

His criticisms may be said to have laid, in England, the foundations of a logical and reasoned method. Sidney's *Apology* is a noble panegyric: the pamphlets of Campion and Daniel contain some passages of brilliant skirmishing, but it is with Dryden's prefaces that our science of criticism really begins. Into these he poured all his treasures of wit and learning, all his persuasive wisdom, all his gift of lucid exposition. Sometimes he advocated a cause that has been given against him: to say this detracts nothing from the merit of his advocacy. Sometimes, as in the passage on translation here quoted, he seems to have said the last word that the subject admits—all that is left is to apply his maxims and develop his arguments. And all through he has a cordial and honest admiration for good work, even when it is of a kind that is different from his own. He rescued Chaucer from oblivion and restored him to his place among the great poets. He revered Shakespeare in an age which thought *Othello* 'a mean thing' and the *Midsummer Night's Dream* 'a most insipid, ridiculous play'. He paid royal homage to Milton while the Town wits were sneering at 'the old blind schoolmaster's tedious poem upon the fall of man'. Grant that the other Dryden, dramatist and adapter, laid sacrilegious hands upon all three. Grant that even Dryden the critic was not faultless in his adjustment of praise and censure. It still remains true that he had a far deeper insight into poetry than any other critic of his time; and that his judgements, whether right or wrong, are the reasoned conclusions from principles which he believed to be just.

It is useless to inquire whether he could have made a lasting name as a dramatist. Of his twenty-seven plays one alone was 'written to please himself': all

the others were occasional pieces aimed at a popular taste, which has fortunately proved to be transitory. But in *All for Love*, his version of the Antony and Cleopatra story, there are undoubtedly some touches of greatness: the tragedy can still be read with pleasure, and might well be accorded another hearing on the stage. Of his Odes, the two finest are that on Alexander's Feast and that on St. Cecilia's Day: both stately examples of a form in which English verse and English music have equally excelled. That he falls below the first rank of poets is indisputable: he lacks the fervour, the passion, the imaginative power which alone give access to the higher summits. But as a man of letters he occupies a wide domain, over which his supremacy can never be challenged. He summed up the seventeenth century; he prepared the way for the eighteenth; and he has left behind him a monument which will last as long as our literature endures.

JOHN DRYDEN (1631-1700) began his literary career while still a boy at Westminster. His *Tears of the Muses on the Death of Henry, Lord Hastings* (1641) is in the artificial fashion of the day. Dryden's family were all 'Parliament men', and in 1658 he wrote his *Heroic Stanzas* on the death of Oliver Cromwell. His next work was *Astraea Redux*, celebrating the Restoration, followed by a *Panegyric* upon the coronation of Charles II. In 1662 he was made a member of the Royal Society, and in the next year his first play, *The Wild Gallant*, was acted. Dryden now turned his attention to the drama, and began to produce plays with extraordinary rapidity. When the theatres were closed (1665-6) on account of the plague, he retired to Wiltshire, where he wrote *Annus Mirabilis* and the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. In 1666 he returned to London, and it is said that he undertook to provide the King's Theatre with three plays a year. He also collaborated with Davenant in rewriting *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*, and turned Milton's *Paradise Lost* into an heroic opera. The best of his plays is *All for Love*, which is founded on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. In 1670 he became

poet laureate. In 1681 appeared *Absalom and Achitophel*, a brilliant satire on the Popish Plot, followed in 1682 by *The Medal*. In the same year appeared *Muc Flecknoe*, an answer to Shadwell's attacks on Dryden, and the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, of which the greater part was written by Tate. In November, 1682, the *Religio Laici*, a poetical defence of the Church of England, was published. In 1684-5 he published two volumes of miscellaneous poems. After the accession of James, Dryden became a Roman Catholic, and in 1687 he printed *The Hind and the Panther*, a defence of the Roman Church. Among his minor poems the best known is *Alexander's Feast*, written in 1697. He also translated works of Virgil and Ovid. His famous essays were written as prefaces to his various plays and poems.

Dryden is said to have been the first English man of letters to make a livelihood by his pen without being dependent on patrons.

## ALL FOR LOVE

## ACT I. SCENE 1.

Antony has sacrificed fame and honour in order to live in luxury in Egypt. Ventidius has come to try and rouse him.

*Enter ANTONY, walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks.*

*Ant.* THEY tell me 'tis my birthday, and I'll keep it  
With double pomp of sadness.

'Tis what the day deserves which gave me breath.  
Why was I raised the meteor of the world  
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travelled  
Till all my fires were spent; and then cast downward  
To be trod out by Caesar?

*Vent. (aside).* On my soul  
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!

*Ant.* Count thy gains.  
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this?

Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth 10  
Has starved thy wanting age.

*Vent. (aside).* How sorrow shakes him !  
So now the tempest tears him up by the roots  
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.

(*ANT. having thrown himself down.*)

Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor ;  
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth  
Is all thy empire now : now it contains thee ;  
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large  
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,  
Shrunk to a few cold ashes ; then Octavia <sup>1</sup> 20  
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it)—  
Octavia then will have thee all her own,  
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Caesar ;  
Caesar will weep, the crocodile will weep,  
To see his rival of the universe  
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.

*Ant.* Give me some music ; look that it be sad ;  
I'll sooth my melancholy, till I swell  
And burst myself with sighing. [*Soft music.*  
'Tis somewhat to my humour : stay, I fancy 30  
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature ;  
Of all forsaken and forsaking all ;  
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene ;  
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak,  
I lean my head upon the mossy bark  
And look just of a piece as I grew from it ;  
My uncombed locks, matted like mistletoe  
Hang o'er my hoary face ; a murm'ring brook  
Runs at my foot.

*Vent. (aside).* Methinks, I fancy  
Myself there too.

<sup>1</sup> Caesar's sister and Antony's wife.

*Ant.*                    The herd come jumping by me                    40  
And fearless quench their thirst, while I look on,  
And take me for their fellow-citizen.  
More of this image, more ; it lulls my thoughts.

[*Soft music again.*]

## ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL

### PART I, LINES 146-802

Charles II wished to restore the Roman Catholic religion in England. Shaftesbury came forward as champion of the Protestant cause, and supported Titus Oates, who professed to have discovered a 'Popish Plot'. Dryden, in this poem, attacks Shaftesbury and the Protestant party. Achitophel represents Shaftesbury himself, and Absalom the Duke of Monmouth. The poem opens with an account of the King's opponents.

SOME by their Monarch's fatal mercy grown  
From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the throne  
Were raised in power and public office high ;  
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.  
Of these the false Achitophel was first,                    150  
A name to all succeeding ages curst :  
For close designs and crooked counsels fit,  
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,  
Restless, unfixed in principles and place,  
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace ;  
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
Fretted the pigmy body to decay  
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.  
A daring pilot in extremity,  
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high,                    160  
He sought the storms ; but, for a calm unfit,  
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.  
Great wits are sure to madness near allied  
And thin partitions do their bounds divide ;  
Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,

Refuse his age the needful hours of rest ?  
Punish a body which he could not please,  
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease ?  
And all to leave what with his toil he won  
To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son, 170  
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try,  
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.  
In friendship false, implacable in hate,  
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state ;  
To compass this the triple bond he broke,  
The pillars of the public safety shook,  
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke ;  
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,  
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.  
So easy still it proves in factious times 180  
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.  
How safe is treason and how sacred ill,  
Where none can sin against the people's will,  
Where crowds can wink and no offence be known,  
Since in another's guilt they find their own !  
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge ;  
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.  
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin  
With more discerning eyes or hands more clean,  
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress, 190  
Swift of despatch and easy of access.  
Oh ! had he been content to serve the crown  
With virtues only proper to the gown,  
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed  
From cockle that oppressed the noble seed,  
David for him his tuneful harp had strung  
And Heaven had wanted one immortal song.  
But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand,  
And fortune's ice prefers to virtue's land.

Achitophel, grown weary to possess 200  
A lawful fame and lazy happiness,  
Disdained the golden fruit to gather free  
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.  
Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,  
He stood at bold defiance with his Prince,  
Held up the buckler of the people's cause  
Against the crown, and skulked behind the laws.  
The wished occasion of the Plot he takes ;  
Some circumstances finds, but more he makes ;  
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears 210  
Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears  
Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,  
And proves the King himself a Jebusite.  
Weak arguments ! which yet he knew full well  
Were strong with people easy to rebel.  
For governed by the moon, the giddy Jews  
Tread the same track when she the prime renews :  
And once in twenty years their scribes record,  
By natural instinct they change their lord.  
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none 220  
Was found so fit as warlike Absalon.  
Not that he wished his greatness to create,  
For politicians neither love nor hate ;  
But, for he knew his title not allowed  
Would keep him still depending on the crowd,  
That kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be  
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.  
Him he attempts with studied arts to please  
And sheds his venom in such words as these :

‘ Auspicious prince, at whose nativity 230  
Some royal planet ruled the southern sky,  
Thy longing country's darling and desire,



Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire,  
Their second Moses, whose extended wand  
Divides the seas and shows the promised land,  
Whose dawning day in every distant age  
Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage,  
The people's prayer, the glad diviner's theme,  
The young men's vision and the old men's dream,  
Thee Saviour, thee the nation's vows confess, 240  
And never satisfied with seeing bless :  
Swift unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,  
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.  
How long wilt thou the general joy detain,  
Starve and defraud the people of thy reign ?  
Content ingloriously to pass thy days,  
Like one of virtue's fools that feeds on praise ;  
Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,  
Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight.  
Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be 250  
Or gathered ripe, or rot upon the tree.  
Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,  
Some lucky revolution of their fate :  
Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill,  
(For human good depends on human will,)  
Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent  
And from the first impression takes the bent ;  
But, if unseized, she glides away like wind  
And leaves repenting folly far behind.  
Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize 260  
And spreads her locks before her as she flies.  
Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,  
Not dared, when fortune called him to be King,  
At Gath an exile he might still remain,  
And Heaven's anointing oil had been in vain.  
Let his successful youth your hopes engage,

But shun the example of declining age.  
Behold him setting in his western skies,  
The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise ;  
He is not now, as when, on Jordan's sand, 270  
The joyful people thronged to see him land,  
Covering the beach and blackening all the strand,  
But like the Prince of Angels, from his height  
Comes tumbling downward with diminished light :  
Betrayed by one poor plot to public scorn,  
(Our only blessing since his curst return,)  
Those heaps of people, which one sheaf did bind,  
Blown off and scattered by a puff of wind.  
What strength can he to your designs oppose,  
Naked of friends, and round beset with foes ? 280  
If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use,  
A foreign aid would more incense the Jews ;  
Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring,  
Foment the war, but not support the King ;  
Nor would the royal party e'er unite  
With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite ;  
Or, if they should, their interest soon would break  
And with such odious aid make David weak.  
All sorts of men, by my successful arts  
Abhorring kings, estrange their altered hearts 290  
From David's rule : and 'tis the general cry,  
Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.  
If you, as champion of the public good,  
Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,  
What may not Israel hope, and what applause  
Might such a general gain by such a cause ?  
Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower,  
Fair only to the sight, but solid power ;  
And nobler is a limited command,  
Given by the love of all your native land, 300

Than a successive title, long and dark,  
 Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark.'

PART I, LINES 477-568

He said, and this advice above the rest  
 With Absalom's mild nature suited best ;  
 Unblamed of life (ambition set aside),  
 Not stained with cruelty nor puffed with pride, 480  
 How happy had he been, if Destiny  
 Had higher placed his birth or not so high !  
 His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne  
 And blessed all other countries but his own ;  
 But charming greatness since so few refuse,  
 'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.  
 Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,  
 With blandishments to gain the public love,  
 To head the faction while their zeal was hot,  
 And popularly prosecute the plot. 490  
 To further this, Achitophel unites  
 The malcontents of all the Israelites,  
 Whose differing parties he could wisely join  
 For several ends to serve the same design :  
 The best, (and of the princes some were such,)  
 Who thought the power of monarchy too much,  
 Mistaken men and patriots in their hearts,  
 Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts ;  
 By these the springs of property were bent  
 And wound so high they cracked the government. 500  
 The next for interest sought to embroil the state,  
 To sell their duty at a dearer rate,  
 And make their Jewish markets of the throne,  
 Pretending public good to serve their own.  
 Others thought kings an useless heavy load,  
 Who cost too much and did too little good.

These were for laying honest David by  
On principles of pure good husbandry.  
With them joined all the haranguers of the throng  
That thought to get preferment by the tongue. 510  
Who follow next a double danger bring,  
Not only hating David, but the King ;  
The Solymaeen rout, well versed of old  
In godly faction and in treason bold,  
Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword,  
But lofty to a lawful prince restored,  
Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun  
And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.  
Hot Levites headed these ; who pulled before  
From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore, 520  
Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry  
Pursued their old beloved theocracy,  
Where Sanhedrin and priest enslaved the nation  
And justified their spoils by inspiration ;  
For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,  
If once dominion they could found in grace ?  
These led the pack ; though not of surest scent,  
Yet deepest mouthed against the government.  
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed  
Of the true old enthusiastic breed : 530  
'Gainst form and order they their power employ,  
Nothing to build and all things to destroy.  
But far more numerous was the herd of such  
Who think too little and who talk too much.  
These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,  
Adored their fathers' God and property,  
And by the same blind benefit of Fate  
The Devil and the Jebusite did hate :  
Born to be saved even in their own despite,  
Because they could not help believing right. 540

Such were the tools ; but a whole Hydra more  
 Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.  
 Some of their chiefs were princes of the land ;  
 In the first rank of these did Zimri<sup>1</sup> stand,  
 A man so various that he seemed to be  
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome :  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
 Was everything by starts and nothing long ;  
 But in the course of one revolving moon  
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon ; 550  
 Then all for women, painting, riming, drinking,  
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.  
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ  
 With something new to wish or to enjoy !  
 Railing and praising were his usual themes,  
 And both, to show his judgement, in extremes :  
 So over violent or over civil  
 That every man with him was God or Devil.  
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art ;  
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.<sup>2</sup> 560  
 Beggared by fools whom still he found too late,  
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.  
 He laughed himself from court ; then sought relief  
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief :  
 For spite of him, the weight of business fell  
 On Absalom and wise Achitophel ;  
 Thus wicked but in will, of means bereft,  
 He left not faction, but of that was left.

<sup>1</sup> George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham : one of the members of the Cabal. He published in 1672 a burlesque called *The Rehearsal*, in which Dryden was satirized under the name of Bayes. Dryden retaliated with the character of Zimri, which, according to his own account, was good-humouredly received. 'He was too witty,' says Dryden, 'to resent it as an injury.'

<sup>2</sup> A reference to Butler (the author of *Hudibras*), whom Buckingham neglected, and who died in want.

## THE HIND AND THE PANTHER

## PART III, LINES 993-1033

The Hind in this allegorical satire represents the Church of Rome ; the Panther the Church of England. At the beginning of the poem they meet and enter into friendly discussion as to the merits of their respective creeds. During this discussion the Hind relates the fable of the pigeons and the fowls—an allegory within an allegory—by which again the two Churches are represented. The pigeons and fowls are owned by ‘a plain good man’, possessor of ‘three fair lineal lordships’, and the story of them proceeds as follows:—

ANOTHER farm he had behind his house,  
 Not overstocked, but barely for his use ;  
 Wherein his poor domestic poultry<sup>1</sup> fed  
 And from his pious hands received their bread.  
 Our pampered pigeons<sup>2</sup> with malignant eyes  
 Beheld these inmates and their nurseries ;  
 Though hard their fare, at evening and at morn,  
 A cruse of water and an ear of corn,  
 Yet still they grudged that modicum, and thought  
 A sheaf in every single grain was brought.      18  
 Fain would they filch that little food away,  
 While unrestrained those happy gluttons prey.  
 And much they grieved to see so nigh their hall  
 The bird that warned St. Peter of his fall ;  
 That he should raise his mitred crest on high,  
 And clap his wings and call his family  
 To sacred rites ; and vex the ethereal powers  
 With midnight matins at uncivil hours ;  
 Nay more, his quiet neighbours should molest,  
 Just in the sweetness of their morning rest.      20  
 ‘Beast of a bird, supinely when he might  
 Lie snug and sleep, to rise above the light !

<sup>1</sup> The Church of Rome.<sup>2</sup> The Church of England.

What if his dull forefathers used that cry,  
 Could he not let a bad example die ?  
 The world was fallen into an easier way ;  
 This age knew better than to fast and pray.  
 Good sense in sacred worship would appear  
 So to begin as they might end the year.  
 Such feats in former times had wrought the falls  
 Of crowing chanticleers in cloistered walls. 30  
 Expelled for this and for their lands, they fled,  
 And sister Partlet, with her hooded head,  
 Was hooted hence, because she would not pray abed.  
 The way to win the restive world to God  
 Was to lay by the disciplining rod,  
 Unnatural fasts, and foreign forms of prayer :  
 Religion frights us with a mien severe.  
 'Tis prudence to reform her into ease,  
 And put her in undress, to make her please ;  
 A lively faith will bear aloft the mind 40  
 And leave the luggage of good works behind.

### A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony  
 This universal frame began ;  
 When Nature underneath a heap  
 Of jarring atoms lay,  
 And could not heave her head,  
 The tuneful voice was heard from high,  
 Arise, ye more than dead.

Then cold and hot and moist and dry  
 In order to their stations leap,  
 And Music's power obey.  
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony

10

This universal frame began :  
From harmony to harmony  
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?  
When Jubal <sup>1</sup> struck the chorded shell,  
His listening brethren stood around,  
And, wondering, on their faces fell  
To worship that celestial sound : 20  
Less than a god they thought there could not dwell  
Within the hollow of that shell,  
That spoke so sweetly and so well.  
What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?

The trumpet's loud clangor  
Excites us to arms  
With shrill notes of anger  
And mortal alarms.  
The double double double beat  
Of the thundering drum 30  
Cries, hark ! the foes come ;  
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

The soft complaining flute  
In dying notes discovers  
The woes of hopeless lovers,  
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim  
Their jealous pangs and desperation,  
Fury, frantic indignation,  
Depth of pains and height of passion, 40  
For the fair, disdainful dame.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis iv. 21.



But oh ! what art can teach,  
 What human voice can reach  
     The sacred organ's praise ?  
     Notes inspiring holy love,  
 Notes that wing their heavenly ways  
     To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,  
 And trees unrooted left their place,  
     Sequacious<sup>1</sup> of the lyre ;  
 But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher :  
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,  
 An angel heard, and straight appeared,  
     Mistaking earth for heaven.

50

*Grand Chorus.*

As from the power of sacred lays  
 The spheres began to move,  
 And sung the great Creator's praise  
     To all the blessed above ;  
 So when the last and dreadful hour  
 This crumbling pageant shall devour,  
 The trumpet shall be heard on high,  
 The dead shall live, the living die,  
 And Music shall untune the sky.

60

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION  
 OF OVID'S EPISTLES

No man is capable of translating poetry, who, besides a genius to that art, is not a master both of his author's language, and of his own ; nor must we understand the language only of the poet, but his particular turn of thoughts and expression, which are the characters that

<sup>1</sup> i. e. following.

distinguish, and as it were individuate him from all other writers. When we are come thus far, 'tis time to look into ourselves, to conform our genius to his, to give his thought either the same turn, if our tongue will bear it, or, if not, to vary but the dress, not to alter or destroy the substance. The like care must be taken of the more outward ornaments, the words. When they appear (which is but seldom) literally graceful, it were an injury to the author that they should be changed. But since every language is so full of its own proprieties, that what is beautiful in one, is often barbarous, nay sometimes nonsense, in another, it would be unreasonable to limit a translator to the narrow compass of his author's words : 'tis enough if he choose out some expression which does not vitiate the sense. I suppose he may stretch his chain to such a latitude ; but by innovation of thoughts, methinks he breaks it. By this means the spirit of an author may be transfused, and yet not lost : and thus 'tis plain, that the reason alleged by Sir John Denham<sup>1</sup> has no farther force than to expression ; for thought, if it be translated truly, cannot be lost in another language ; but the words that convey it to our apprehension (which are the image and ornament of that thought,) may be so ill chosen, as to make it appear in an unhandsome dress, and rob it of its native lustre. There is, therefore, a liberty to be allowed for the expression ; neither is it necessary that words and lines should be confined to the measure of their original. The sense of an author, generally speaking, is to be sacred and inviolable. If the fancy of Ovid be

<sup>1</sup> 'Poetry is of so subtle a spirit that in pouring out of one language into another it will all evaporate ; and if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion there will remain nothing but a caput mortuum.'—Denham, *Preface to the translation of the Second Æneid*.

luxuriant, 'tis his character to be so ; and if I retrench it, he is no longer Ovid. It will be replied, that he receives advantage by this lopping of his superfluous branches ; but I rejoin, that a translator has no such right. When a painter copies from the life, I suppose he has no privilege to alter features and lineaments, under pretence that his picture will look better : perhaps the face which he has drawn would be more exact, if the eyes or nose were altered ; but 'tis his business to make it resemble the original. In two cases only there may a seeming difficulty arise ; that is, if the thought be notoriously trivial or dishonest ; but the same answer will serve for both, that then they ought not to be translated :—

. . . Et quae

*Desperes tractata nitescere posse, relinquas.*<sup>1</sup>

Thus I have ventured to give my opinion on this subject against the authority of two great men, but I hope without offence to either of their memories ; for I both loved them living, and reverence them now they are dead. But if, after what I have urged, it be thought by better judges that the praise of a translation consists in adding new beauties to the piece, thereby to recompense the loss which it sustains by change of language, I shall be willing to be taught better, and to recant. In the meantime it seems to me that the true reason why we have so few versions which are tolerable, is not from the too close pursuing of the author's sense, but because there are so few who have all the talents which are requisite for translation, and that there is so little praise and so small encouragement for so considerable a part of learning.

<sup>1</sup> And abandon everything which you feel that you will never make to shine in the handling. Horace, *A.P.* 149.

## CHAPTER V

### POPE AND HIS CIRCLE

It was natural that at the beginning of the eighteenth century literary interests should be concentrated more and more closely upon London. Political intrigues and controversies gave abundant opportunity to a ready pen; statesmen of both parties were generous patrons who could reward with pay or place a timely pamphlet or a well-turned copy of verses; wits were sharpened at clubs and social gatherings; fashion hung round the court and took its tone from the presence-chamber. Chelsea might be an outpost and Tunbridge Wells a remote colony, but west of Staines was a wilderness which had nothing to counterbalance the amenities of civilization. 'I hate,' says a disconsolate poet in the Midlands—

I hate the brook that murmurs at my feet,  
Give me the kennels of St. James's Street;  
And when on sultry days I pant for air,  
Give me the breezes of St. James's Square.

Provincial life was left to its own devices; poet and fop, quidnunc and politician alike turned their back on the country to whisper compliments at my lady's basset-table, or settle affairs of state over a bowl of punch at the coffee-house.

Not far from St. James's Square there used to meet, during the early years of the century, one of the most brilliant groups that ever debated a principle or discussed a policy. The host was Harley, the great political adventurer who overthrew the Whig aristocracy of King William's reign, and round his table sat Pope and Swift and Arbuthnot and

Prior and Gay; Peterborough, the most unorthodox of generals and the most amusing of dispatch-writers, and Bolingbroke, the witty and philosophic author of the *Patriot King*, who inspired almost all the *Essay on Man*, and about whom, when the comet appeared and men wondered at the meaning of the portent, 'I thought,' said Pope, 'that it had come for Bolingbroke, as a coach calls at one's door for visitors.'

Of these men Swift has been the most misjudged. We admire him but with trembling; we customarily think of him in one of his terrible fits of rage, hurling invective and blasphemy against human nature. But there was far more in him than this. For many years he 'dictated the political opinions of the English people'. He was as keen as Voltaire to destroy an abuse or overwhelm a tyranny. The writers of his own party treated him with unvarying love and veneration: Addison, who was in many ways his opponent, called him 'the greatest genius, the most agreeable companion and the truest friend'. Assuredly such a character as his cannot be summed up in a confession of 'saeva indignatio'.

The truth would seem to be that he was an idealist soured by disappointment. He lashed mankind because he expected so much from it. His satire is essentially constructive: behind the irony<sup>1</sup> one finds great thoughts, a love of justice and charity and honour. Where he saw roguery he fell upon it in a passion of hate—foul, merciless, unspeakable, dark with that presage of insanity which came closer as the years wore on. But it is not fair to judge him wholly or mainly by these fits of demoniac possession. He fought for the cause of humanity with conviction, with loyalty, with unswerving courage; and we may remember this ere

<sup>1</sup> It may be observed that Swift's irony, though always simple and natural, is unmistakable. Defoe's is sometimes so grave that we may be deluded into taking it for earnest.

we reproach him with the horror which settled like a poisonous cloud upon his life.

Pope, his compeer and his intimate friend, was an artist of a very different temper. His satire is almost always destructive, almost always personal; one thinks of the 'little figure writhing with anguish' as he read some coarse lampoon on his deformity and laid it down with a forced smile, saying, 'these things are my diversions.' On the larger issues he seldom gives the impression that he feels deeply. Virtue is the opportunity for a compliment, vice the opportunity for an epigram; even religion itself is a comfortable optimistic theism which never drives to the roots. The centre of his genius, apart from satire, is to be found in *The Rape of the Lock*: he treats his artificial theme with perfect grace and felicity; nowhere in our literature has romance been more charmingly bantered.

Yet for all their differences Pope and Swift have one point in common. Each is, in his way, an unerring master of style. The prose of Swift is a model of simplicity and ease, a texture so perfect that it can afford to dispense with ornament. The verse of Pope is like the verse of Racine, lucid, polished, melodious; a little monotonous in the cadence, lacking the varied flexibility of Dryden, but compensating by an extraordinary sweetness in the tone. He is a master of the aphorism, of the terse phrase, of the clear-cut sentence: he never wastes a word or bows to a rhyme; his best lines are as exact as those of a miniature. It is not surprising that he influenced every couplet-writer of his time and set the pattern which they vainly endeavoured to imitate.

Prior and Gay are the masters of a lighter vein: the one scholar, wit, and man of the world, who had served as Ambassador at the French Court and had bandied repartees with King Louis himself; the

other, as Thackeray says, 'a little round sleek Abbé of a man, soft-handed and soft-hearted,' who lived contentedly under patronage and had no taste for conflicts and ambitions. Prior's lyrics are like jewel-work—dainty, scintillating, full of brightness and colour; Gay has far less art, but touches us by a gentle appealing sincerity like that of a child. That 'odd, pretty sort of a thing' the *Beggars' Opera*, written as a burlesque at Swift's suggestion, gave him a vogue which he neither expected nor desired; he was far more at home writing fables at the fire-side or tuning his spinet for a pathetic ballad. But the *Beggars' Opera*, which fired the town and drove Handel to bankruptcy, is too important an event to be set aside, and it is therefore by a song from this that he is here represented.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688-1744) was sickly and deformed from childhood, and was further cut off from other boys by the fact that he was a papist, and could therefore go neither to a public school nor to the university. He was an extraordinarily precocious child, and was early encouraged by his father to write verses. His *Pastorals* were written before he was eighteen, and they at once brought him into notice. The *Essay on Criticism* appeared in 1711. He became a member of Addison's circle, and his *Messiah* was published in the *Spectator* (1712). In the same year appeared *The Rape of the Lock*, and in 1713 came *Windsor Forest*. He helped Swift, Gay, Parnell, Arbuthnot, Congreve, and others, to found the 'Scriblerus Club', at which met a large number of the best-known men of letters of the day. In 1715 the first numbers of his famous translation of the *Iliad* were published, and a dispute concerning this brought to a head the quarrel between him and Addison, which had long been imminent. He produced a large number of short poems and essays, and in 1725 edited the works of Shakespeare. *The Dunciad* appeared in 1728, and was enlarged in 1729. In this edition the hero was Theobald, who had offended Pope by criticizing his edition of Shakespeare. The fourth book was added in 1742, when

Theobald was replaced by Cibber. The *Moral Essays* were begun in 1731. Pope was a warm admirer of Bolingbroke, and in 1733 he produced the *Essay on Man*, which is largely an attempt to express in poetic form Bolingbroke's conception of the universe. The *Universal Prayer* appeared in 1738. In 1737 he began a new series of satires with the *Epistle to Augustus*. In addition to these he wrote a number of miscellaneous works, including a modernized version of Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's Tale*, the epistle of *Eloisa to Abelard*, an *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, a translation of the *Odyssey*, and many letters.

### ESSAY ON CRITICISM

BUT most by numbers judge a poet's song ;  
 And smooth or rough with them is right or wrong :  
 In the bright muse though thousand charms conspire,  
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire ; 340  
 Who haunt Parnassus<sup>1</sup> but to please their ear,  
 Not mend their minds ; as some to Church repair,  
 Not for the doctrine, but the music there.  
 These equal syllables alone require,  
 Though oft the ear the open vowels tire ;  
 While expletives their feeble aid do join ;  
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line :  
 While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,  
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;  
 Where'er you find ' the cooling western breeze ', 350  
 In the next line, it ' whispers through the trees ' :  
 If crystal streams ' with pleasing murmurs creep ',  
 The reader ' s threatened (not in vain) with ' sleep ' :  
 Then, at the last and only couplet fraught  
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,  
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song  
 That, like a wounded snake, draws its slow length along

<sup>1</sup> The mountain sacred to the Muses.



Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know  
 What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow;  
 And praise the easy vigour of a line, 360  
 Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.<sup>1</sup>  
 True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
 As those move easiest who have learned to dance.  
 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense:  
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar:  
 When Ajax<sup>2</sup> strives some rock's vast weight to throw, 370  
 The line too labours, and the words move slow;  
 Not so, when swift Camilla<sup>3</sup> scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.  
 Hear how Timotheus'<sup>4</sup> varied lays surprise,  
 And bid alternate passions fall and rise!  
 While, at each change, the son<sup>5</sup> of Libyan Jove  
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with love,  
 Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,  
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:  
 Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found, 380  
 And the world's victor stood subdued by sound!  
 The power of music all our hearts allow,  
 And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now.

<sup>1</sup> 'The excellency and dignity of it (i. e. rhyme) were never fully known till Mr. Waller (1606-87) taught it; he first made writing easily an art. . . . This sweetness of Mr. Waller's lyric poesy was afterwards followed in the epic by Sir John Denham (1615-69) in his *Cooper's Hill*, a poem which your Lordship knows, for the majesty of the style is, and ever will be, the exact standard of good writing.'—Dryden, *Epistle Dedicatory of the Rival Ladies*.

<sup>2</sup> A Greek hero at Troy: renowned for bodily strength.

<sup>3</sup> The swift-footed queen of the Volscians. Virg. *Aen.* vii. 883.

<sup>4</sup> Chief musician at the court of Alexander the Great.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander. See Dryden's poem *Alexander's Feast*.

Avoid extremes ; and shun the fault of such,  
 Who still are pleased too little or too much.  
 At every trifle scorn to take offence,  
 That always shows great pride, or little sense ;  
 Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,  
 Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.  
 Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move ; 390  
 For fools admire, but men of sense approve :  
 As things seem large which we through mists descry,  
 Dullness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise ;  
 The ancients only, or the moderns prize.  
 Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied  
 To one small sect, and all are damned beside.  
 Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,  
 And force that sun but on a part to shine,  
 Which not alone the southern wit sublimed, 400  
 But ripens spirits in cold northern climes ;  
 Which from the first has shone on ages past,  
 Enlights the present, and shall warm the last ;  
 Though each may feel increases and decays,  
 And see now clearer and now darker days.  
 Regard not, then, if wit be old or new,  
 But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a judgement of their own,  
 But catch the spreading notion of the town ;  
 They reason and conclude by precedent, 410  
 And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.  
 Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then  
 Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.  
 Of all this servile herd the worst is he  
 That in proud dullness joins with quality.  
 A constant critic at the great man's board,  
 To fetch and carry nonsense for my lord.

What woful stuff this madrigal would be,  
 In some starved hackney sonneteer, or me ;  
 But let a lord once own the happy lines, 420  
 How the wit brightens ! how the style refines !  
 Before his sacred name flies every fault,  
 And each exalted stanza teems with thought !

## EPISTLE TO ARBUTHNOT

PEACE to all such ! but were there One whose fires  
 True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires ;  
 Blest with each talent and each art to please,  
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease :  
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne ;  
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 And hate for arts that caused himself to rise ; 200  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;  
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;  
 Alike reserved to blame, or to commend,  
 A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend ;  
 Dreading even fools, by flatterers besieged,  
 And so obliging, that he ne'er obliged ;  
 Like Cato <sup>1</sup>, give his little senate laws,  
 And sit attentive to his own applause ; 210  
 While wits and templars every sentence raise,  
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise :—  
 Who but must laugh if such a man there be ?  
 Who would not weep if Atticus <sup>2</sup> were he ?

<sup>1</sup> A reference to Addison's tragedy, *Cato*, which was produced in 1718.

<sup>2</sup> Addison.

What though my name stood rubric on the walls,  
 Or plastered posts, with claps, in capitals ?  
 Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers' load,  
 On wings of winds came flying all abroad ?  
 I sought no homage from the race that write ;  
 I kept, like Asian monarchs, from their sight : 220  
 Poems I heeded (now berimed so long)  
 No more than thou, great George<sup>1</sup> ! a birthday song.  
 I ne'er with wits or witlings passed my days,  
 To spread about the itch of verse and praise ;  
 Nor like a puppy daggled<sup>2</sup> through the town,  
 To fetch and carry sing-song up and down ;  
 Nor at rehearsals sweat, and mouthed, and cried,  
 With handkerchief and orange at my side ;  
 But sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,  
 To Bufo<sup>3</sup> left the whole Castalian state. 230

Proud as Apollo on his forkèd hill,  
 Sat full-blown Bufo, puffed by every quill ;  
 Fed with soft dedication all day long,  
 Horace and he went hand in hand in song.  
 His library (where busts of poets dead  
 And a true Pindar<sup>4</sup> stood without a head,)  
 Received of wits an undistinguished race,  
 Who first his judgement asked, and then a place :  
 Much they extolled his pictures, much his seat,  
 And flattered every day, and some days eat : 240  
 Till, grown more frugal in his riper days,  
 He paid some bards with port, and some with praise ;  
 To some a dry rehearsal was assigned,  
 And others (harder still) he paid in kind.  
 Dryden alone (what wonder ?) came not nigh,

<sup>1</sup> George II.

<sup>2</sup> To daggles is to run through the mud.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the fable of the frog (bufo) and the ox.

<sup>4</sup> The most famous lyric poet of Greece.

Dryden alone escaped this judging eye :  
 But still the great have kindness in reserve,  
 He helped to bury whom he helped to starve.

May some choice patron bless each grey goose-quill !  
 May every Bavius <sup>1</sup> have his Bufo still ! 250  
 So, when a statesman wants a day's defence,  
 Or envy holds a whole week's war with sense,  
 Or simple pride for flattery makes demands,  
 May dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands !  
 Blest be the great, for those they take away,  
 And those they left me ; for they left me Gay ;  
 Left me to see neglected genius bloom,  
 Neglected die, and tell it on his tomb :  
 Of all thy blameless life the sole return  
 My Verse, and Queensberry <sup>2</sup> weeping o'er thy urn ! 260

Oh, let me live my own, and die so too !  
 (To live and die is all I have to do :)  
 Maintain a poet's dignity and ease,  
 And see what friends, and read what books I please ;  
 Above a patron, though I condescend  
 Sometimes to call a minister my friend.  
 I was not born for courts or great affairs ;  
 I pay my debts, believe, and say my prayers ;  
 Can sleep without a poem in my head ;  
 Nor know if Dennis <sup>3</sup> be alive or dead. 270

Why am I asked what next shall see the light ?  
 Heavens ! was I born for nothing but to write ?  
 Has life no joys for me ? or (to be grave)  
 Have I no friend to serve, no soul to save ?  
 'I found him close with Swift'—'Indeed ? no doubt,'  
 (Cries prating Balbus) 'something will come out.'  
 'Tis all in vain, deny it as I will.

<sup>1</sup> Proverb for a bad poet. Virg. *Ecl.* iii. 90.      <sup>2</sup> See p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> A famous critic of the day, often attacked by Pope.

‘No, such a genius never can lie still’;  
 And then for mine obligingly mistakes  
 The first lampoon Sir Will.<sup>1</sup> or Bubo<sup>2</sup> makes. 280  
 Poor guiltless I! and can I choose but smile,  
 When every coxcomb knows me by my style?

Cursed be the verse, how well soe’er it flow,  
 That tends to make one worthy man my foe,  
 Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,  
 Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear!  
 But he who hurts a harmless neighbour’s peace,  
 Insults fallen worth, or beauty in distress,  
 Who loves a lie, lame slander helps about,  
 Who writes a libel, or who copies out: 290  
 That fop, whose pride affects a patron’s name,  
 Yet absent, wounds an author’s honest fame:  
 Who can your merit selfishly approve,  
 And show the sense of it without the love;  
 Who has the vanity to call you friend,  
 Yet wants the honour, injured, to defend;  
 Who tells whate’er you think, whate’er you say,  
 And, if he lie not, must at least betray:  
 Who to the dean, and silver bell can swear,<sup>3</sup>  
 And sees at Canons<sup>4</sup> what was never there; 300  
 Who reads, but with a lust to misapply,  
 Makes satire a lampoon, and fiction lie.  
 A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,  
 But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Yonge, who was noted for his fluency of speech.

<sup>2</sup> Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, noted as the favourite of Frederick Prince of Wales, and a patron of minor poets and authors.

<sup>3</sup> Pope had been accused of ridiculing the ostentation of the Duke of Chandos in his *Epistle on Taste*, which was afterwards incorporated with Epistle IV of the *Moral Essays*. The reference is to lines 141–50 of the Epistle.

<sup>4</sup> The residence, in the Edgware Road, of the Duke of Chandos.

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667-1745) was born in Dublin and educated at King's College. As a young man he entered the household of Sir William Temple, and for some time acted as his amanuensis. It was here that he first met Esther Johnson, the 'Stella' whom he is said to have married secretly, and for whom he later wrote his *Journal*. He was ordained in 1694. In the same year he wrote the *Battle of the Books*, in which he defended Temple in his controversy with the supporters of modern, as opposed to ancient, learning. It remained in manuscript till 1704, when it and the *Tale of a Tub* (written between 1694 and 1697) were published together. Swift began his political career by defending the Whig lords who were impeached in 1701, and his *Discourse on the Dissentions in Athens and Rome* was at one time taken for the work of Somers himself. The Whigs, however, were too closely allied with the Nonconformists for Swift to remain attached to their party. He quarrelled with them over the question of extending Queen Anne's Bounty to the clergy of Ireland, and in 1710 formed a close friendship with Harley and Bolingbroke, the Tory leaders. He had been given the livings of Laracor, Agher, and Rathbeggan, and constantly passed backwards and forwards between Ireland and England. In 1710-11 he edited the *Examiner*, the chief organ of the Tories, and published the *Conduct of the Allies*, an attack on the war. In 1718 he was made Dean of St. Patrick's. The death of the queen caused Swift to retire from political life for some time. In 1720 he published a proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures, and in 1724 appeared the famous *Drapier Letters*, a vehement protest against the debasing of the Irish coinage. A reward was offered for the discovery of the author of the fourth, and most violent, of these letters. *Gulliver's Travels* had been begun about 1720, and was published in 1726. In 1728 'Stella' died, and Swift never afterwards left Ireland. He continued to write pamphlets and essays from time to time, and was also the author of several satires and other 'occasional' verses. Towards the end of his life his health, which had always been poor, gave way completely. 'I shall be like a tree: I shall die at the top,' he was once heard to say, and in 1741 guardians had to be appointed for him. He was buried near 'Stella' in the Cathedral of St. Patrick.

## A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT

(From *Gulliver's Travels*)

ALTHOUGH I intend to leave the description of this empire to a particular treatise, yet, in the meantime, I am content to gratify the curious reader with some general ideas. As the common size of the natives is somewhat under six inches high, so there is an exact proportion in all other animals, as well as plants and trees; for instance, the tallest horses and oxen are between four and five inches in height, the sheep an inch and half, more or less: their geese about the bigness of a sparrow, and so the several gradations downwards, till you come to the smallest, which to my sight were almost invisible; but nature has adapted the eyes of the Lilliputians to all objects proper for their view: they see with great exactness, but at no great distance. And, to show the sharpness of their sight towards objects that are near, I have been much pleased with observing a cook pulling a lark, which was not so large as a common fly: and a young girl threading an invisible needle with invisible silk. Their tallest trees are about seven feet high: I mean some of those in the great royal park, the tops whereof I could but just reach with my fist clenched. The other vegetables are in the same proportion; but this I leave to the reader's imagination.

. . . . .

There are some laws and customs in this empire very peculiar; and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear country, I should be tempted to say a little in their justification. It is only to be wished they were as well executed. The first I shall mention relates to informers. All crimes against the state are punished here with the utmost severity; but, if the per-



son accused makes his innocence plainly to appear upon his trial, the accuser is immediately put to an ignominious death ; and out of his goods or lands the innocent person is quadruply recompensed for the loss of his time, for the danger he underwent, for the hardship of his imprisonment, and for all the charges he has been at in making his defence ; or, if that fund be deficient, it is largely supplied by the crown. The emperor also confers on him some public mark of his favour, and proclamation is made of his innocence through the whole city.

They look upon fraud as a greater crime than theft, and therefore seldom fail to punish it with death ; for they allege, that care and vigilance, with a very common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from thieves, but honesty has no fence against superior cunning ; and since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon credit ; where fraud is permitted and connived at, or has no law to punish it, the honest dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the advantage. I remember, when I was once interceding with the king for a criminal who had wronged his master of a great sum of money, which he had received by order, and ran away with ; and happening to tell his majesty, by way of extenuation, that it was only a breach of trust, the emperor thought it monstrous in me to offer as a defence the greatest aggravation of the crime ; and truly I had little to say in return, farther than the common answer, that different nations had different customs ; for I confess, I was heartily ashamed.

In choosing persons for all employments, they have more regard to good morals than to great abilities ; for, since government is necessary to mankind, they believe that the common size of human understanding is fitted

to some station or other; and that Providence never intended to make the management of public affairs a mystery to be comprehended only by a few persons of sublime genius, of which there seldom are three born in an age: but they suppose truth, justice, temperance, and the like, to be in every man's power; the practice of which virtues, assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country, except where a course of study is required. But they thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind, that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and at least, that the mistakes committed by ignorance, in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the public weal, as the practices of man, whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and who had great abilities to manage, to multiply, and defend his corruptions.

And here it may, perhaps, divert the curious reader, to give some account of my domestics, and my manner of living in this country, during a residence of nine months and thirteen days. Having a head mechanically turned, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. Two hundred sempstresses were employed to make me shirts, and linen for my bed and table, all of the strongest and coarsest kind they could get; which, however, they were forced to quilt together in several folds, for the thickest was some degrees finer than lawn. Their linen is usually three inches wide, and three feet make a piece. The sempstresses took my measure as I lay on the ground, one standing at my neck, and another at my mid-leg, with a strong cord

extended, that each held by the end, while a third measured the length of the cord with a rule of an inch long. Then they measured my right thumb, and desired no more ; for by a mathematical computation, that twice round the thumb is once round the wrist, and so on to the neck and the waist, and by the help of my old shirt, which I displayed on the ground before them for a pattern, they fitted me exactly. Three hundred tailors were employed in the same manner to make me clothes ; but they had another contrivance for taking my measure. I kneeled down, and they raised a ladder from the ground to my neck ; upon this ladder one of them mounted, and let fall a plumb-line from my collar to the floor, which just answered the length of my coat : but my waist and arms I measured myself. When my clothes were finished, which was done in my house (for the largest of theirs would not have been able to hold them), they looked like the patch-work made by the ladies in England, only that mine were all of a colour.

I had three hundred cooks to dress my victuals, in little convenient huts built about my house, where they and their families lived, and prepared me two dishes apiece. I took up twenty waiters in my hand, and placed them on the table : a hundred more attended below on the ground, some with dishes of meat, and some with barrels of wine and other liquors slung on their shoulders ; all which the waiters above drew up, as I wanted, in a very ingenious manner by certain cords, as we draw the bucket up a well in Europe. A dish of their meat was a good mouthful, and a barrel of their liquor a reasonable draught. Their mutton yields to ours, but their beef is excellent. I have had a sirloin so large, that I have been forced to make three bits of it ; but this is rare. My servants were astonished to see me eat it, bones and all, as in our

country we do the leg of a lark. Their geese and turkeys I usually ate at a mouthful, and I confess they far exceed ours. Of their smaller fowl I could take up twenty or thirty at the end of my knife.

One day his imperial majesty, being informed of my way of living, desired 'that himself and his royal consort, with the young princes of the blood of both sexes, might have the happiness', as he was pleased to call it, 'of dining with me.' They came accordingly, and I placed them in chairs of state, upon my table, just over against me, with their guards about them. Flimnap, the lord high treasurer, attended there likewise with the white staff; and I observed he often looked on me with a sour countenance, which I would not seem to regard, but ate more than usual, in honour to my dear country, as well as to fill the court with admiration. I have some private reasons to believe, that this visit from his majesty gave Flimnap an opportunity of doing me ill offices to his master. That minister had always been my secret enemy, though he outwardly caressed me more than was usual to the moroseness of his nature. He represented to the emperor 'the low condition of his treasury; that he was forced to take up money at a great discount; that exchequer bills would not circulate under nine per cent. below par; that I had cost his majesty above a million and a half of *sprugs* (their greatest gold coin, about the bigness of a spangle); and, upon the whole, that it would be advisable in the emperor to take the first fair occasion of dismissing me.'

MATTHEW PRIOR (1664-1721), poet and diplomatist, was educated at Westminster, under the famous Dr. Busby. In 1686 he and Charles Montague (later Earl of Halifax) published an answer to Dryden's *Hind and Panther*, entitled *The Hind and the Panther transvers'd to the Story of the Country-Mouse and the*

*City-Mouse*. He became secretary to Lord Dursley, who was ambassador at the Hague, and spent several years in Holland. During this time he wrote several short poems, including a *Hymn to the Sun* (1694), and some memorial verses on the death of Queen Mary. In 1697 he was employed as secretary in the negotiations concerning the Peace of Ryswick, and in 1698 he became secretary to the embassy at Paris. In 1699 appeared his *Carmen Seculare for the year 1700*, in honour of 'the Nassovian'. After the retirement of Locke he became commissioner of trade and plantations, and later entered Parliament as member for East Grinstead. In 1702 he joined the Tories, and came into close relationship with Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift. He was concerned in the negotiations which preceded the Peace of Utrecht, and on his return was imprisoned by a blundering official as a French spy. After the death of Anne (1714) Prior was impeached by Sir Robert Walpole, and was kept in custody. He amused himself during his enforced idleness by writing *Alma; or the Progress of the Mind*, a discursive poem in the metre of Butler's *Hudibras*. He was set at liberty two years later. In 1718 appeared a folio edition of his poems, including *Alma*, and an heroic poem in three books called *Solomon on the Vanity of the World*. He now settled in the country, and bought an estate in Essex. In his ballad of *Down Hall* he describes his experiences when he first came to take possession of it. He died in 1721, and was buried as he desired, 'at the feet of Spenser.'

### CHLOE AND EUPHELIA

THE merchant, to secure his treasure,  
 Conveys it in a borrowed name :  
 Euphelia serves to grace my measure ;  
 But Chloe is my real flame !

My softest verse, my darling lyre,  
 Upon Euphelia's toilet lay ;  
 When Chloe noted her desire  
 That I should sing ! that I should play !

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise ;  
 But with my numbers mix my sighs !      10  
 And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise  
 I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes !  
 Fair Chloe blushed ! Euphelia frowned !  
 I sung and gazed ! I played and trembled !  
 And Venus to the Loves around  
 Remarked how ill we all dissembled !

JOHN GAY (1685-1732) was born in Devonshire, and after serving apprenticeship to a mercer became secretary to Aaron Hill. His first poem, *Wine*, was written in burlesque imitation of Milton's blank verse. In 1711 he wrote a pamphlet on *The Present State of Wit*, which gives an interesting account of periodic literature, especially of the *Tatler*, which had just come to an end, and the *Spectator*, which had just begun. His series of Pastorals, *The Shepherd's Pipe*, was written at the instigation of Pope, and professed to be a realistic description of country life. In 1715 he published a pastoral farce, the *What d'ye call it*, in 1716 *Trivia ; or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*, in which Swift gave him some help. In 1720 two volumes of his poems were published ; in 1724 his tragedy, *The Captives*, was acted at Drury Lane, and in the same year he began a series of *Fables* for Prince William. At the suggestion of Swift he produced, in 1728, *The Beggars' Opera*, which had a remarkable success. During the later part of his life he resided with the Duke of Queensberry.

### SONG FROM THE BEGGARS' OPERA

YOUTH 's the season made for joys !  
 Love is then our duty !  
 She alone who that employs  
 Well deserves her beauty !  
 Let 's be gay,  
 While we may !  
 Beauty 's a flower despised in decay !  
*Chorus.* Youth 's the season made for joys, &c.

Let us drink and sport to-day!

Ours is not to-morrow!

10

Love with Youth flies swift away!

Age is nought but sorrow!

Dance and sing!

Time's on the wing!

Life never knows the return of Spring.

*Chorus.* Let us drink and sport to-day, &c.

## CHAPTER VI

### A CONFLICT OF STYLES

From this movement and interplay of social life there followed, in the reign of Queen Anne, a noticeable advance in the popularity of the newspaper. During the seventeenth century our periodical press had maintained against odds a scanty and intermittent life; at the turn of the eighteenth it grew rapidly into unwonted vigour and importance. The *Daily Courant* appeared in 1703; the *Review*, edited by Daniel Defoe, in 1704; in 1710 came the *Examiner*, with Prior and Bolingbroke on the staff; and the impetus once in motion gathered and augmented in steadily increasing volume. The *Public Advertiser*, famous afterwards for the letters of Junius, was first published in 1726; the *Morning Chronicle* in 1769; the *Morning Post* in 1772; the *Times*<sup>1</sup> in 1785; by the last quarter of the century we are told that there were over fifty newspapers in London alone. From the outset these papers aimed at something more than the narration of current events. Defoe, for example, issued a weekly supplement of satire and criticism; and they thus served to arouse a literary interest which found in the great Periodic Essays its proper satisfaction.

First among these came the *Tatler*, of which the opening number was printed by Steele in the spring of 1709. Addison was at the time away in Ireland; but as soon as he heard of the project he gave it his complete approval and support, contributed many of the best numbers; and when, in 1711, the *Spectator*

<sup>1</sup> It was first called the *Universal Register*, and assumed its present title in 1788.



followed, assumed the predominant place in its control. 'I fared,' says Steele, 'like a distressed prince who calls in a more powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary.' And in this half-humorous complaint there is some truth. Of the two men Steele had the more impulse, the greater originality; Addison was incomparably the better equipped in character and education, he had a larger and serener outlook on life, and (though Steele's English is admirable) a more sustained and dignified manner. Posterity has decided to rank Addison's work at the higher estimate; and in width of range, depth of insight, and power of critical judgement, he is undoubtedly the greater of the two.

The success of their collaboration was immediate and widespread. Everybody in the town waited for the Friday paper on literature and the Saturday paper on 'philosophy'<sup>1</sup>; every taste was met by a scheme which ranged from Milton to Sir Roger de Coverley, from the English ballad to misbehaviour in church, from the Patriarchs to the Everlasting Club, from the principles of morality to the shape of a furbelow. And every successive topic is treated with sincerity and truth and humour, which makes it a permanent possession. We should give other names to Portia and Will Wimble and Mr. Froth, but we offer them none the less a recognition and a welcome.

In the generations that followed the tradition was worthily carried on. The robust sense of Johnson, the delicate sympathy of Goldsmith, appealed to a thousand readers who would have found Locke difficult and Berkeley paradoxical, who would have revolted from the dogmatic certainty of Clarke and

<sup>1</sup> 'I have brought philosophy,' said Addison, 'out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.' See Mr. Stopford Brooke's *English Literature*, p. 128.

met Hume with his own scepticism. Questions of life and conduct, of law and expediency, were treated in a manner which the plain reader could understand, which needed no philosophic training, which stated the deepest problems in a language free from technicality. Then, when the form had achieved its purpose, it sank gradually into decay. In the *Idler* and the *Rambler* it maintained the standard which had been set by the Augustan age; in the later collections of Colman and his contemporaries it passed away into mere levity and anecdote.

Among the essayists of the middle eighteenth century, Johnson is conspicuous for his theory of a literary diction. Addison and Steele perfected the conversational speech of their time; the words that they used were the common currency of the market-place; their art lay in aptitude of choice and in supreme mastery of rhythm. But with Johnson there is a definite separation of the written from the spoken phrase. His talk, as recorded by Boswell, is in a simple nervous English, which hit the nail on the head without flourish or gesticulation; his composition is sometimes overweighted with a sense of its own responsibility. The 'dirty fellow' of whom he complained in the Highlands becomes in his journal 'black as a Cyclops from the forge'; the comedy which 'had not wit enough to keep it sweet', on second thoughts 'does not possess vitality to preserve it from putrefaction'. If he had written a fable about the little fishes he would, as Goldsmith said, have made the little fishes talk like whales. And it is therefore interesting to observe that among his contemporaries we can trace, more clearly than in any preceding epoch of English literature, the growing divorce between style and colloquialism. No doubt earlier instances may be found—Hooker, Sir Thomas Browne, perhaps Milton (though this is more doubtful)—but

Jonson, Dryden, Walton, Swift, Addison wrote as we may imagine them to have spoken, with the same idioms, the same vocabulary, and something of the same cadence. With Burke, on the other hand, we find deliberate artifice, the heightened melody, the ennobled phrase, the long-wrought period which, like a tune of Beethoven, has been returned again and again to the anvil. And with Gibbon this tendency is even more apparent. A page of his history is like a sheet of metal: the light reverberates from its polished lustre until the splendour is almost more than the eye can bear. Contrast him with Clarendon: it is a difference not of century but of ideal. There has come into our literature the conception of a 'grand style', by which, for good or ill, its later development has been largely affected.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719) was educated at Charterhouse, and afterwards at Magdalen College, Oxford. He was noted for his scholarship, and the Latin poems which he wrote while at the University were much admired. In 1699 he went abroad, and the next three years were spent in travelling. He published an account of his travels in 1705 under the title *Remarks on several parts of Italy*. In 1704 he was commissioned to write a poem on the Duke of Marlborough's victory, and produced *The Campaign*, which brought him at once into prominence. He was given an under-secretaryship, and from this time onwards became a political force. He was always an ardent Whig, and in 1710 he endeavoured to counteract the influence of the Tory organ by publishing the *Whig Examiner*. In 1709 Steele started *The Tatler*, to which Addison contributed forty-one papers, besides collaborating with Steele in thirty-four. *The Tatler* was succeeded by *The Spectator*, which was published daily from March 1, 1711, to December 6, 1712. In 1713 Addison's one tragedy, *Cato*, was acted at Drury Lane, with great success. *The Spectator* revived for a short time in 1713, and Addison also wrote for Steele's new paper, *The Guardian*. In 1715 his comedy of *The Drummer* failed

on the stage. In 1715-16 came *The Freeholder*, a paper on the lines of *The Spectator*, but definitely political. In 1716 he married the Countess of Warwick. He retired in 1718 with a pension of £1,500 a year, but died in June, 1719. Among his other works are a translation of part of the fourth Georgic of Virgil; a few English poems; and two political pamphlets called *The Old Whig*.

## SPECTATOR, No. 106

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over a hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his *valet de chambre* for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and

in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time, the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with; on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of a humorist; and that his virtues, as well as his imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my answer, told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of back-gammon. My friend, says Sir Roger, found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he has every day solicited me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them: if any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not

acquiesce in his judgement, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him, that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity.

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us ; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to morrow (for it was Saturday night) told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors, who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice ; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example ; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

SIR RICHARD STEELE (1672-1729) was born in Dublin, and was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford. In 1694 he left the University without taking his degree and entered the army. He was noted for his recklessness and improvidence, and seems to have been intimate with the wits of the day. In 1700 he nearly killed a Captain Kelly in a duel, and his remorse produced *The Christian Hero*, a devotional work, part of which was afterwards embodied in *The Spectator*. In 1701 his comedy, *The Funeral; or Grief a-la-Mode*, was acted at Drury Lane. This was followed in 1703 by *The Lying Lover* and *The Tender Husband*. In 1708 he succeeded to Addison's under-secretaryship, but in spite of several small Government appointments he was always in difficulties. In April, 1709, he started *The Tatler*, under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff. In 1711 came *The Spectator*, and in 1713 *The Guardian*. His political pamphlets involved him in a controversy with Swift, and finally succeeded in producing a coldness between him and his oldest friend, Addison. *The Guardian* was followed by several more or less unsuccessful papers of the same sort. In 1722 his last comedy, *The Conscious Lovers*, was acted, but the last few years of his life produced no work of importance.

### THE TATLER, No. 181

THERE are those among mankind, who can enjoy no relish of their being, except the world is made acquainted with all that relates to them, and think everything lost that passes unobserved; but others find a solid delight in stealing by the crowd, and modelling their life after such a manner, as is as much above the approbation as the practice of the vulgar. Life being too short to give instances great enough of true friendship or good-will, some sages have thought it pious to preserve a certain reverence for the *manes* of their deceased friends; and have withdrawn themselves from the rest of the world at certain seasons, to commemorate in their own thoughts such of their acquaintance who have gone before them out of this life. And indeed, when we are advanced in



years, there is not a more pleasing entertainment, than to recollect in a gloomy moment the many we have parted with, that have been dear and agreeable to us, and to cast a melancholy thought or two after those, with whom, perhaps, we have indulged ourselves in whole nights of mirth and jollity. With such inclinations in my heart I went to my closet yesterday in the evening, and resolved to be sorrowful ; upon which occasion I could not but look with disdain upon myself, that though all the reasons which I had to lament the loss of many of my friends are now as forcible as at the moment of their departure, yet did not my heart swell with the same sorrow which I felt at the time ; but I could, without tears, reflect upon many pleasing adventures I have had with some, who have long been blended with common earth. Though it is by the benefit of nature, that length of time thus blots out the violence of afflictions ; yet, with tempers too much given to pleasure, it is almost necessary to revive the old places of grief in our memory ; and ponder step by step on past life, to lead the mind into that sobriety of thought which poises the heart, and makes it beat with due time, without being quickened with desire, or retarded with despair, from its proper and equal motion. When we wind up a clock that is out of order, to make it go well for the future, we do not immediately set the hand to the present instant, but we make it strike the round of all its hours, before it can recover the regularity of its time. Such, thought I, shall be my method this evening ; and since it is that day of the year which I dedicate to the memory of such in another life as I much delighted in when living, an hour or two shall be sacred to sorrow and their memory, while I run over all the melancholy circumstances of this kind which have occurred to me in my whole life.

'The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father, at which time I was not quite five years of age ; but was rather amazed at what all the house meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling Papa ; for, I know not how, I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother caught me in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her embraces ; and told me in a flood of tears, ' Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again.' She was a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit, and there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport ; which, methought, struck me with an instinct of sorrow, that, before I was sensible of what it was to grieve, seized my very soul, and has made pity the weakness of my heart ever since. The mind in infancy is, methinks, like the body in embryo ; and receives impressions so forcible, that they are as hard to be removed by reason, as any mark with which a child is born is to be taken away by any future application. Hence it is, that good-nature in me is no merit ; but having been so frequently overwhelmed with her tears before I knew the cause of any affliction, or could draw defences from my own judgement, I imbibed commiseration, remorse, and an unmanly gentleness of mind, which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities ; and from whence I can reap no advantage, except it be, that, in such a humour as I am now in, I can the better indulge myself in the softnesses of humanity, and enjoy

that sweet anxiety which arises from the memory of past afflictions.

We, that are very old, are better able to remember things which befell us in our distant youth, than the passages of later days. For this reason it is, that the companions of my strong and vigorous years present themselves more immediately to me in this office of sorrow. Untimely and unhappy deaths are what we are most apt to lament; so little are we able to make it indifferent when a thing happens, though we know it must happen. Thus we groan under life, and bewail those who are relieved from it. Every object that returns to our imagination raises different passions, according to the circumstance of their departure. Who can have lived in an army, and in a serious hour reflect upon the many gay and agreeable men that might long have flourished in the arts of peace, and not join with the imprecations of the fatherless and widow on the tyrant to whose ambition they fell sacrifices? But gallant men, who are cut off by the sword, move rather our veneration than our pity; and we gather relief enough from their own contempt of death, to make that no evil, which was approached with so much cheerfulness, and attended with so much honour. But when we turn our thoughts from the great parts of life on such occasions, and instead of lamenting those who stood ready to give death to those from whom they had the fortune to receive it; I say, when we let our thoughts wander from such noble objects, and consider the havoc which is made among the tender and the innocent, pity enters with an unmixed softness, and possesses all our souls at once.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728-1774) was the son of an Irish clergyman, the original of the poor parson in *The Deserted Village*. He at first intended to take Orders; then he studied

medicine in Edinburgh, and finally, in 1753, he went to Leyden, and spent the next two years in wandering about the Continent. On his return to England he became assistant to a chemist in London, and afterwards set up as a Physician. Early in 1757 he became employed by Griffiths, the proprietor of *The Monthly Review*, and from this time turned his attention to literature. He wrote for a number of papers and magazines, and did hack work of every kind. The *Chinese Letters*, published in book form as *The Citizen of the World* in 1762, were originally contributed twice a week to *The Public Ledger*. In 1764 his *History of England* was published anonymously. Goldsmith was one of the original nine members of the club founded by Johnson, and Johnson seems to have been one of the few people to appreciate his genius at this time. In 1764 came *The Traveller*, which ran through nine editions. *The Vicar of Wakefield* was published in 1766, and Goldsmith's reputation was now established. In 1767 his comedy, *The Goodnatured Man*, was produced. In 1770 came *The Deserted Village*, and in 1773 *She Stoops to Conquer* was produced with great success. His last poem, *Retaliation*, was published after his death.

## CITIZEN OF THE WORLD. LETTER XXVI

### THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN IN BLACK, WITH SOME INSTANCES OF HIS INCONSISTENT CONDUCT

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinged with some strange inconsistencies: and he may be justly termed a humorist in a nation of humorists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence; though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was

glowing with compassion ; and, while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness, others boast of having such dispositions from nature ; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings, as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference ; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. In every parish-house, says he, the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on ; they want no more, I desire no more myself ; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious : I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible, that it in some measure encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences : let me assure you, Sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief.

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the

shameful profession, to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me ; but it was quite otherwise with the man in black : I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive, that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him at the same time, in order that I should hear, go work for his bread, and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before : he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors ; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars, were he a magistrate ; hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggarmen. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend looking wishfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied in a tone as angrily

as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad, in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment; he had not a single question more to ask: he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches; but, not waiting for a reply, desired in a surly tone to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollecting himself, and presenting his whole bundle, 'Here master,' says he, 'take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain.'

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase: he assured me, that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match, instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice, that it

was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who in the deepest distress still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding: his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her; but guess his confusion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709-1784) was the son of a bookseller at Lichfield. In 1736 he opened a small school near Lichfield, which was attended by David Garrick. Soon afterwards he moved to London, where he became a regular contributor to *The Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1738 he published *London*, a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. In 1744 came his *Life of Savage*, afterwards included in the *Lives of the Poets*, which was followed in 1749 by a second satire on *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. In the same year Garrick produced *Irene*, Johnson's one tragedy. In 1750 Johnson started *The Rambler*, in imitation of *The Spectator*. It was published twice a week, and continued until March, 1752. The *Dictionary* appeared in 1755, and was at once accepted as a standard work. In 1756 he became editor of *The Literary Magazine, or Universal Review*, which expired in 1758 and was succeeded by *The Idler*. In 1759 his mother died, and in order to raise money for the necessary expenses he wrote *Rasselas*, which was finished in a week. In 1765 he published his edition of Shakespeare. Ten years later came the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, and in 1777 appeared the *Lives of the Poets*.



## THE RAMBLER, No. CXXV

It is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; everything is set above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art too inconstant and uncertain to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great that we can never take it into our view, or so mutable that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticisms than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the inclosures of regularity. There is therefore scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; for though perhaps they might properly have contented

themselves with declaring it to be *such a dramatic representation of human life as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic composition which raises mirth is comic; and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite that the action should be trivial, nor ever that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatic poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfall of kingdoms and the rout of armies. They have not considered that thoughts or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs,

by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

'Comedy,' says Horace, 'sometimes raises her voice; and Tragedy may likewise, on proper occasions, abate her dignity; but as the comic personages can only depart from their familiarity of style when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle but in the hours of ease and intermissions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of *Don Sebastian*<sup>1</sup>, when the king of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Afric, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

*Muley Moluch.* What shall I do to conquer thee?

*Seb.*

Impossible!

Souls know no conquerors.

*M. Mol.* I'll show thee for a monster thro' my Afric.

*Seb.* No, thou canst only show me for a man:

Afric is stor'd with monsters; man's a prodigy

Thy subjects have not seen.

*M. Mol.*

Thou talk'st as if

Still at the head of battle.

*Seb.*

Thou mistak'st,

For there I would not talk.

*Benducar, the Minister.* Sure he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comic, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to

<sup>1</sup> By Dryden, 1690.

the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

—No more replies,  
But see thou do'st it: Or——

To which Dorax answers,

Choke in that threat; I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in *Aureng-Zebe*<sup>1</sup> sufficient to exemplify it. Indamora, a captive queen, having Aureng-Zebe for her lover, employs Arimant, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry a message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand.* INDAMORA.

*Arim.* And I the messenger to him from you?  
Your empire you to tyranny pursue;  
You lay commands, both cruel and unjust,  
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.

*Ind.* You first betray'd your trust in loving me;  
And should not I my own advantage see?  
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain:  
You know the rest of your pretences vain.  
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind;  
'Tis in your nature and your noble mind.

*Arim.* I'll to the king, and strait my trust resign.

*Ind.* His trust you may, but you shall never mine.  
Heav'n made you love me for no other end  
But to become my confidant and friend;  
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,  
And therefore make you judge how ill I write.  
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,  
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.

*Arim.* I ask not Heav'n my freedom to restore, [*Reading.*  
*But only for your sake*——I'll read no more.  
And yet I must——

*Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad*—— [*Reading.*

<sup>1</sup> By Dryden, 1675.

Another line, like this would make me mad.  
Heav'n ! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind !

[*As reading.*]

Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.

*See me this night—*

[*Reading.*]

*Thank Fortune, who did such a friend provide ;*

*For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.*

Not only to be made an instrument,

But pre-engag'd without my own consent !

*Ind.* Unknown t'engage you, still augments my score,  
And gives you scope of meriting the more.

*Arim.* The best of men

Some int'rest in their actions must confess ;

None merit, but in hope they may possess.

The fatal paper rather let me tear

Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.

*Ind.* You may ; but 'twill not be your best advice :

'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.

You know you must obey me, soon or late ;

Why should you vainly struggle with your fate ?

*Arim.* I thank thee, Heaven ! thou hast been  
wondrous kind !

Why am I thus to slavery design'd,

And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind !

Or make thy orders with thy reason suit,

Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—

[*She frowns.*]

You frown, and I obey with speed, before

That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient : the contemptible subjection of the lover ; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only because it ought to have been concealed from him ; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience ; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave ; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power ; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and freewill ; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he

cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions with buffoonery and meanness; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults which either ignorance had overlooked or indulgences had licensed. The later tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularly admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that, if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

EDWARD GIBBON (1737-1794) was educated at Westminster and at Magdalen College, Oxford. In 1753 he was received into the Church of Rome. His father at once sent him to Lausanne to be under the care of a Calvinist minister, and he was soon reconverted. He began his literary career with a French essay on the study of literature (1761). In 1764 he visited Rome and first conceived the idea of writing a history of the Roman Empire, and in 1768 he began it in earnest. He was a member of Dr. Johnson's famous club, but does not seem to have been popular with the other members. The first volume of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* appeared in 1776, and three editions were soon sold. The last volume was published in 1788. He had settled at Lausanne in 1783 and remained there until 1793, when he paid a visit to England. He died while staying with Lord Sheffield.

## CONSTANTINE'S INVASION OF ITALY

(From *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter XIV)

WHILE Constantine signalized his conduct and valour in the field, the sovereign of Italy appeared insensible of the calamities and danger of a civil war which raged in the heart of his dominions. Pleasure was still the only business of Maxentius. Concealing, or at least attempting to conceal, from the public knowledge the misfortunes of his arms, he indulged himself in vain confidence which deferred the remedies of the approaching evil, without deferring the evil itself. The rapid progress of Constantine was scarcely sufficient to awaken him from this fatal security; he flattered himself that his well-known liberality, and the majesty of the Roman name, which had already delivered him from two invasions, would dissipate with the same facility the rebellious army of Gaul. The officers of experience and ability who had served under the banners of Maximian were at length compelled to inform his effeminate son of the imminent danger to which he was reduced; and, with a freedom that at once surprised and convinced him, to urge the necessity of preventing his ruin by a vigorous exertion of his remaining power. The resources of Maxentius, both of men and money, were still considerable. The Praetorian guards felt how strongly their own interest and safety were connected with his cause; and a third army was soon collected, more numerous than those which had been lost in the battles of Turin and Verona. It was far from the intention of the emperor to lead his troops in person. A stranger to the exercises of war, he trembled at the apprehension of so dangerous a contest; and, as fear is commonly superstitious, he listened with melancholy attention to the rumours of omens and

presages which seemed to menace his life and empire. Shame at length supplied the place of courage, and forced him to take the field. He was unable to sustain the contempt of the Roman people. The circus resounded with their indignant clamours, and they tumultuously besieged the gates of the palace, reproaching the pusillanimity of their indolent sovereign, and celebrating the heroic spirit of Constantine. Before Maxentius left Rome, he consulted the Sibylline books. The guardians of these ancient oracles were as well versed in the arts of this world, as they were ignorant of the secrets of fate; and they returned him a very prudent answer, which might adapt itself to the event, and secure their reputation whatever should be the chance of arms.

The celerity of Constantine's march has been compared to the rapid conquest of Italy by the first of the Caesars; nor is the flattering parallel repugnant to the truth of history, since no more than fifty-eight days elapsed between the surrender of Verona and the final decision of the war. Constantine had always apprehended that the tyrant would obey the dictates of fear, and perhaps of prudence; and that, instead of risking his last hopes in a general engagement, he would shut himself up within the walls of Rome. His ample magazines secured him against the danger of famine; and, as the situation of Constantine admitted not of delay, he might have been reduced to the sad necessity of destroying with fire and sword the Imperial city, the noblest reward of his victory, and the deliverance of which had been the motive, or rather indeed the pretence, of the civil war. It was with equal surprise and pleasure that, on his arrival at a place called Saxa Rubra, about nine miles from Rome, he discovered the army of Maxentius prepared to give him battle. Their long front filled a very spacious plain, and



their deep array reached to the banks of the Tiber, which covered their rear, and forbade their retreat. We are informed, and we may believe, that Constantine disposed his troops with consummate skill, and that he chose for himself the post of honour and danger. Distinguished by the splendour of his arms, he charged in person the cavalry of his rival; and his irresistible attack determined the fortune of the day. The cavalry of Maxentius was principally composed either of unwieldy cuirassiers<sup>1</sup> or of light Moors and Numidians. They yielded to the vigour of the Gallic horse, which possessed more activity than the one, more firmness than the other. The defeat of the two wings left the infantry without any protection on its flanks, and the undisciplined Italians fled without reluctance from the standard of a tyrant whom they had always hated, and whom they no longer feared. The Praetorians, conscious that their offences were beyond the reach of mercy, were animated by revenge and despair. Notwithstanding their repeated efforts, those brave veterans were unable to recover the victory: they obtained, however, an honourable death; and it was observed that their bodies covered the same ground which had been occupied by their ranks. The confusion then became general, and the dismayed troops of Maxentius, pursued by an implacable enemy, rushed by thousands into the deep and rapid stream of the Tiber. The emperor himself attempted to escape back into the city over the Milvian bridge, but the crowds which pressed together through that narrow passage forced him into the river, where he was immediately drowned by the weight of his armour. His body, which had sunk very deep into the mud, was found with some difficulty the next day. The sight of his head, when it was exposed

<sup>1</sup> Cuirass: the body-armour worn by heavy cavalry.

to the eyes of the people, convinced them of their deliverance, and admonished them to receive with acclamations of loyalty and gratitude the fortunate Constantine, who thus achieved by his valour and ability the most splendid enterprise of his life.

EDMUND BURKE (1729-1797) was a member of Johnson's club, and a close friend of Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, and the rest. Like Goldsmith, he was an Irishman, though nearly all his life was spent in England. He was noted for his eloquence, and Wordsworth, in the *Prelude*, speaks of the impression made upon him by hearing Burke speak in Parliament. He strongly opposed the American War, and as strongly advocated opposition to the French Revolution. Among his more important works are: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1756); *Speech on American Taxation* (1774); *Speech on Conciliation with America* (1775); *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (1777); *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790); *Thoughts on the Prospect of a Peace with the Regicide Directory* (1796).

## THE QUEEN

(From *The Revolution in France*)

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in,—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against

disgrace concealed in that bosom ; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.—But the age of chivalry is gone.—That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded ; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone ! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

#### SPEECH TO THE ELECTORS OF BRISTOL

. . . . .

Do you think, gentlemen, that every public act in the six years since I stood in this place before you,—that all the arduous things which have been done in this eventful period, which has crowded into a few years' space the revolutions of an age,—can be opened to you on their fair grounds in half an hour's conversation ?

But it is no reason, because there is a bad mode of inquiry, that there should be no examination at all. Most certainly it is our duty to examine ; it is our interest too : but it must be with discretion ; with an attention to all the circumstances, and to all the motives ; like sound

judges, and not like cavilling pettifoggers and quibbling pleaders, prying into flaws and hunting for exceptions. Look, gentlemen, to the *whole tenor* of your member's conduct. Try whether his ambition or his avarice have justled him out of the straight line of duty ; or whether that grand foe of the offices of active life, that master-vice in men of business,—a degenerate and inglorious sloth,—has made him flag and languish in his course. This is the object of our inquiry. If our member's conduct can bear this touch, mark it for sterling. He may have fallen into errors : he must have faults ; but our error is greater, and our fault is radically ruinous to ourselves, if we do not bear, if we do not even applaud, the whole compound and mixed mass of such a character. Not to act thus is folly : I had almost said it is impiety. He censures God who quarrels with the imperfections of man.

Gentlemen, we must not be peevish with those who serve the people ; for none will serve us, whilst there is a court to serve, but those who are of a nice and jealous honour. They who think everything, in comparison of that honour, to be dust and ashes, will not bear to have it soiled and impaired by those for whose sake they make a thousand sacrifices to preserve it immaculate and whole. We shall either drive such men from the public stage, or we shall send them to the court for protection ; where, if they must sacrifice their reputation, they will at least secure their interest. Depend upon it, that the lovers of freedom will be free. None will violate their conscience to please us, in order afterwards to discharge that conscience, which they have violated, by doing us faithful and affectionate service. If we degrade and deprave their minds by servility, it will be absurd to expect that they who are creeping and abject towards us will ever be bold and incorruptible assertors of our freedom against

the most seducing and the most formidable of all powers. No! human nature is not so formed; nor shall we improve the faculties or better the morals of public men by our possession of the most infallible receipt in the world for making cheats and hypocrites.

Let me say, with plainness, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our representatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal scope to their understandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a *very* enlarged view of things, we shall at length infallibly degrade our national representation into a confused and scuffling bustle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the service of the crown will be the sole nursery of statesmen. Among the frolics of the court it may at length take that of attending to its business. Then the monopoly of mental power will be added to the power of all other kinds it possesses. On the side of the people there will be nothing but impotence; for ignorance is impotence; narrowness of mind is impotence; timidity is itself impotence, and makes all other qualities that go along with it impotent and useless.

At present it is the plan of the court to make its servants insignificant. If the people should fall into the same humour, and should choose their servants on the same principles of mere obsequiousness and flexibility, and total vacancy or indifference of opinion in all public matters, then no part of the state will be sound; and it will be in vain to think of saving it.

## CHAPTER VII

### NOVELISTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE general tone and temper of our literature during the eighteenth century were particularly favourable to the growth of the novel. It was pre-eminently an age of reason and observation, of lucid judgement and insight, an age to which 'the proper study of mankind is man', intolerant of mysticism, suspicious of enthusiasm, less intent on the contemplation of ideals than on the direct expression of human life. Pope's *Rape of the Lock* is animated by the spirit of the novel, so are Addison's papers on Sir Roger de Coverley, so are Goldsmith's on Beau Tibbs: in all alike the author presents, narrates, depicts, creating a character which is not wholly his own, and looking through its eyes at the changing world of experience. In our seventeenth-century writings we touch at first hand the personality of the author; in those of the period which followed we often see it projected across an intervening medium.

Defoe, from whom the eighteenth-century novel may be said to take its origin, is curiously impersonal. He becomes in turn Robinson Crusoe or Captain Singleton or Moll Flanders: he enters into their feelings, he describes their careers, he records their adventures with the dispassionate accuracy of the chronicler. Contrast him with Nashe, his last predecessor in the picaresque novel. Nashe is always standing aloof from the story, confiding in the reader, drawing attention to his wit or his judgement or his power of description. Defoe tells

you the event exactly as it happened; you take his fiction for an historical occurrence, you determine its chronology, you follow it upon the map, you wonder that the official annalists have omitted to mention it. If this be realism, Defoe is the first of realists, the earliest author who has made an imaginary world seem wholly familiar. With Bunyan we are always conscious of the allegory, with Swift of the ironic intention; Defoe tells us a traveller's tale, and we accept it for matter of fact.

Not less remarkable, in another field, is the genius of Richardson. The little precise bookseller who looked out on the street from his shop window and was too ignorant of life to invent a situation showed the most astonishing power of realizing and expressing certain general types of human feeling. The plot of *Clarissa* is frankly impossible: Mr. Henry Fielding, the Middlesex magistrate, would have laid Lovelace by the heels before the story was half through; but the *dramatis personae* are beyond all praise. *Clarissa* herself is one of the greatest of English heroines; she ranks with Elizabeth Bennet and with Clara Middleton: we can almost subscribe to the tear-stained letters which, as the book drew near its close, entreated that her life might be spared. Miss Howe is the most charming and sympathetic of *confidantes*; Lovelace himself is so human a villain that one wonders how Richardson contrived to know him so well. And the whole story, for all its length, is told in an easy-flowing style which never flags or falters or hesitates, which keeps the attention entranced, which is lightened with true humour and touched with genuine pathos. Of *Pamela* and *Sir Charles Grandison* there is less need to speak: the one is too uniformly humble, the other too uniformly magnanimous to retain the interest of the reader. But *Clarissa* is an unquestioned masterpiece. We

may hesitate to follow Diderot, who ranked it beside Shakespeare; we cannot refuse to award it a prominent place in the forefront of English fiction.

Critics are accustomed to smile at the 'sentiment' of the eighteenth century, to regard it as a morbid growth in 'an age of reason and common sense'. But the truth is that it only concentrated a feeling which in the nineteenth century became diffused. Sterne is as natural a product of his time as Rousseau: each no doubt is self-conscious, because each represents an isolated tendency, but the tendency is a true and integral part of human nature as a whole. And with Sterne the sentiment is qualified and leavened with its most natural counterpart, the sense of humour. Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim are as much his children as Maria of Moulins: the lines are drawn with a hand too well aware of its grace; but though the phrase is artificial, the feeling that underlies it is true. We may grant a certain freakishness, a momentary impulse to 'throw his periwig in the face of his audience': there is in all his work a want of dignity and reserve, of artistic conscience and rectitude. But the fact remains that he has helped us to the understanding of human nature, and that, while he is the most subjective of eighteenth-century novelists, he has widened our outlook and enlarged our sympathies.

Fielding and Smollett are often classed together as writers of a more masculine vein. But in essentials they have few points of resemblance. Smollett is careful and minute; he draws with the accuracy of a Dutch painter; his mind moves in a narrow range, though within that range he sees everything; his humour is usually farcical, his view of life usually vulgar. Fielding, the 'prose Homer', as Byron called him, is of a far more heroic mould: epic in scale and treatment, full of a strong whole-



some virility, with a keen eye, a warm heart, and a laugh that clears the air. There are coarse pages in his work, as there are in that of Chaucer or Shakespeare, but there is no touch of Smollett's vulgarity: in his doctrine the unpardonable sins are malice, meanness, and hypocrisy, and if a man be honest and open-handed he shall win through.

Two other types of prose fiction remain to be considered. During the whole century there is evidence of a taste for the exotic, the heightened adventure, the remote scene: we find it in the *Vision of Mirza* and in Collins's *Persian Eclogues*; it continued until, with the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe, it passed away into absurdity and extravagance. At the height of the fashion there appeared, in 1764, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*. In the preface to the second edition he discusses his purpose from the same point of view which Coleridge afterwards adopted in regard to the *Lyrical Ballads*<sup>1</sup>: the setting is to be strange and supernatural, the emotions are to be those which, given the surroundings, men and women might be expected to feel. In contradistinction to this is the domestic novel of manners, where the whole scene is simple and familiar: a type represented to the town by Miss Burney, whose *Cecilia* and *Evelina* were at the time remarkably successful, and to the country by Oliver Goldsmith, whose *Vicar of Wakefield* is, in its kind, unsurpassed. From Miss Burney the line of succession ran straight to the novels of Jane Austen: Goldsmith unquestionably influenced Galt, whose *Annals of the Parish* were written in direct discipleship, and may even have had some effect on the domestic novels of Sir Walter Scott

DANIEL DEFOE (1661 ?-1731) came of Nonconformist parents, and early took a warm interest in the struggle between the

<sup>1</sup> *Biographia Literaria*, ch. xiv.

Tories and the Nonconformist party. He served as a trooper in the volunteer regiment which escorted William and Mary through London ; and his first satire of importance, *The True-born Englishman*, was written in answer to an attack on William. In 1702 he published an ironic treatise called *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, for which he was condemned to the pillory and to imprisonment. While in Newgate he began to publish his *Review*, which originated the leading article. In 1706 he published a sham ghost-story called *The True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal*, and a political satire in twelve books called *Jure Divino*. *Robinson Crusoe* appeared in 1719, *Captain Singleton* and *Memoirs of a Cavalier* in 1720, *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jacque*, and the *Journal of the Plague Year* in 1722, and *Roxana* in 1724. Defoe also produced a vast mass of political, didactic, and satiric works.

### CAPTAIN SINGLETON

We lay here, about these several simple disputes, almost five months, when, about the latter end of March, I set sail with the great ship, having in her forty-four guns and 400 men, and the sloop, carrying eighty men. We did not steer to the Malabar coast, and so to the Gulf of Persia, as was first intended, the east monsoons blowing yet too strong, but we kept more under the African coast, where we had the wind variable till we passed the line, and made the Cape Bassa, in the latitude of four degrees ten minutes ; from thence, the monsoons beginning to change to the NE. and NNE., we led it away, with the wind large, to the Maldives, a famous ledge of islands, well known by all the sailors who have gone into those parts of the world ; and, leaving these islands a little to the south, we made Cape Comorin, the southernmost land of the coast of Malabar, and went round the isle of Ceylon. Here we lay by a while to wait for purchase ; and here we saw three large English

East India ships going from Bengal, or from Fort St. George, homeward for England, or rather for Bombay and Surat, till the trade set in.

We brought to, and hoisting an English ancient<sup>1</sup> and pendant<sup>2</sup>, lay by for them, as if we intended to attack them. They could not tell what to make of us a good while, though they saw our colours; and I believe at first they thought us to be French: but as they came nearer to us, we let them soon see what we were, for we hoisted a black flag, with two cross daggers in it, on our main-top-mast head, which let them see what they were to expect.

We soon found the effects of this; for at first they spread their ancients, and made up to us in a line, as if they would fight us, having the wind off shore, fair enough to have brought them on board us; but when they saw what force we were of, and found we were cruisers of another kind, they stood away from us again, with all the sail they could make. If they had come up, we should have given them an unexpected welcome, but as it was, we had no mind to follow them; so we let them go, for the same reasons which I mentioned before.

But though we let them pass, we did not design to let others go at so easy a price. It was but the next morning that we saw a sail standing round Cape Comorin, and steering, as we thought, the same course with us. We knew not at first what to do with her, because she had the shore on her larboard quarter<sup>3</sup>, and if we offered to chase her, she might put into any port or creek, and escape us; but, to prevent this, we sent the sloop to get in between her and the land. As soon as she saw that,

<sup>1</sup> The flag or streamer of a ship (*Johnson's Dictionary*).

<sup>2</sup> A small flag in ships (*Johnson*).

<sup>3</sup> i. e. to the left of the steersman.

she hauled in to keep the land aboard<sup>1</sup>, and when the sloop stood towards her she made right ashore, with all the canvas she could spread.

The sloop, however, came up with her and engaged her, and found she was a vessel of ten guns, Portuguese built, but in the Dutch traders' hands, and manned by Dutchmen, who were bound from the Gulf of Persia to Batavia, to fetch spices and other goods from thence. The sloop's men took her, and had the rummaging of her before we came up. She had in her some European goods, and a good round sum of money, and some pearl; so that, though we did not go to the gulf for the pearl, the pearl came to us out of the gulf, and we had our share of it. This was a rich ship, and the goods were of very considerable value, besides the money and the pearl.

We had a long consultation here what we should do with the men, for to give them the ship, and let them pursue their voyage to Java, would be to alarm the Dutch factory there, who are by far the strongest in the Indies, and to make our passage that way impracticable; whereas we resolved to visit that part of the world in our way, but were not willing to pass the great Bay of Bengal, where we hoped for a great deal of purchase; and therefore it behoved us not to be waylaid before we came there, because they knew we must pass by the Straits of Malacca, or those of Sunda; and either way it was very easy to prevent us.

While we were consulting this in the great cabin, the men had had the same debate before the mast; and it seems the majority there were for pickling up the poor Dutchmen among the herrings; in a word, they were for throwing them all into the sea. Poor William, the Quaker, was in great concern about this, and comes

<sup>1</sup> i. e. close to the land.

directly to me to talk about it. 'Hark thee,' says William, 'what wilt thou do with these Dutchmen that thou hast on board? Thou wilt not let them go, I suppose,' says he. 'Why,' says I, 'William, would you advise me to let them go?' 'No,' says William, 'I cannot say it is fit for thee to let them go; that is to say, to go on with their voyage to Batavia, because it is not for thy turn that the Dutch at Batavia should have any knowledge of thy being in these seas.' 'Well, then,' says I to him, 'I know no remedy but to throw them overboard. You know, William,' says I, 'a Dutchman swims like a fish; and all our people here are of the same opinion as well as I.' At the same time I resolved it should not be done, but wanted to hear what William would say. He gravely replied, 'If all the men in the ship were of that mind, I will never believe that thou wilt be of that mind thyself, for I have heard thee protest against cruelty in all other cases.' 'Well, William,' says I, 'that is true; but what then shall we do with them?' 'Why,' says William, 'is there no way but to murder them? I am persuaded thou canst not be in earnest.' 'No, indeed, William,' says I, 'I am not in earnest; but they shall not go to Java, no, nor to Ceylon, that is certain.' 'But,' says William, 'the men have done thee no injury at all; thou hast taken a great treasure from them; what canst thou pretend to hurt them for?' 'Nay, William,' says I, 'do not talk of that; I have pretence enough, if that be all; my pretence is, to prevent doing me hurt, and that is as necessary a piece of the law of self-preservation as any you can name; but the main thing is, I know not what to do with them, to prevent their prating.'

While William and I were talking, the poor Dutchmen were openly condemned to die, as it may be called,

by the whole ship's company ; and so warm were the men upon it, that they grew very clamorous ; and when they heard that William was against it, some of them swore they should die, and if William opposed it, he should drown along with them.

But, as I was resolved to put an end to their cruel project, so I found it was time to take upon me a little, or the bloody humour might grow too strong ; so I called the Dutchmen up, and talked a little with them. First, I asked them if they were willing to go with us. Two of them offered it presently ; but the rest, which were fourteen, declined it. 'Well, then,' said I, 'where would you go ?' They desired they should go to Ceylon. No, I told them I could not allow them to go to any Dutch factory, and told them very plainly the reasons of it, which they could not deny to be just. I let them know also the cruel, bloody measures of our men, but that I had resolved to save them, if possible ; and therefore I told them I would set them on shore at some English factory in the Bay of Bengal, or put them on board any English ship I met, after I was past the Straits of Sunda or of Malacca, but not before ; for, as to my coming back again, I told them I would run the venture of their Dutch power from Batavia, but I would not have the news come there before me, because it would make all their merchant-ships lay up, and keep out of our way.

It came next into our consideration what we should do with their ship ; but this was not long resolving ; for there were but two ways, either to set her on fire, or to run her on shore, and we chose the last. So we set her foresail with the tack at the cat-head<sup>1</sup>, and lashed

<sup>1</sup> Cat-heads are stout timbers near the bows, used for hauling the anchor. The object of this manœuvre is to make the ship lie closer to the wind.

her helm a little to starboard, to answer her head-sail, and so set her agoing, with neither cat or dog in her; and it was not above two hours before we saw her run right ashore upon the coast, a little beyond the Cape Comorin; and away we went round about Ceylon, for the coast of Coromandel.

We sailed along there, not in sight of the shore only, but so near as to see the ships in the road at Fort St. David, Fort St. George, and at the other factories along that shore, as well as along the coast of Golconda, carrying our English ancient when we came near the Dutch factories, and Dutch colours when we passed by the English factories. We met with little purchase upon this coast, except two small vessels of Golconda, bound across the bay with bales of calicoes and muslins and wrought silks, and fifteen bales of romals<sup>1</sup>, from the bottom of the bay, which were going, on whose account we knew not, to Acheen, and to other ports on the coast of Malacca. We did not inquire to what place in particular; but we let the vessels go, having none but Indians on board.

In the bottom of the bay we met with a great junk belonging to the Mogul's court, with a great many people, passengers as we supposed them to be: it seems they were bound for the river Hooghly or Ganges, and came from Sumatra. This was a prize worth taking indeed; and we got so much gold in her, besides other goods which we did not meddle with—pepper in particular—that it had like to have put an end to our cruise; for almost all my men said we were rich enough, and desired to go back again to Madagascar. But I had other things in my head still, and when I came to talk

<sup>1</sup> An East Indian silk fabric.

with them, and set friend William to talk with them, we put such further golden hopes into their heads that we soon prevailed with them to let us go on.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON (1689-1761) was a printer by trade. Early in life he was employed by the young ladies of his acquaintance to write their love-letters for them, and in 1739 two booksellers, Rivington and Osborne, invited him to publish a series of letters to serve as patterns for illiterate country writers. The result of this commission was his first novel, *Pamela*, which was published in 1740. In 1747 appeared the first four volumes of *Clarissa Harlowe*, and the remaining four followed in 1748. *Sir Charles Grandison*, which was intended as a pendant to *Clarissa*, was published in 1753. All his novels were written in the form of letters.

### CLARISSA HARLOWE

Lovelace, having first paid his addresses to Bella, the elder sister, has transferred his affections to Clarissa. Bella is furious, and so is the brother, James Harlowe, who hates Lovelace. The family try to force Clarissa to marry Mr. Solmes, whom she detests, and on her refusal she is locked up in her room. She consoles herself by writing long letters to her friend, Miss Howe.

#### CLARISSA TO MISS HOWE

*Wednesday, 12 o'clock.*

My aunt Hervey has just gone from me; she came with my sister. I kissed her hand. She saluting me, said, 'Why this distance with your aunt, my dear, who loves you so well?'

She owned she came to expostulate with me, for the peace sake of the family. My mother and she were both willing to impute my resolution to the manner I had been begun with and to my supposing my brother had more hand in Mr. Solmes's proposals than my father.



In short fain would my aunt have furnished me with an excuse to come off my opposition, Bella the while humming a tune and opening this book and that, saying nothing.

It would be but repeating to give you the arguments that passed on both sides.

'I do not doubt,' said my sister, 'it is Miss Clary's aim, if she does not fly to her Lovelace, to get her estate into her hands, and live at the Grove, in that independence on which she builds all her perverseness. And, dear heart, how you will blaze away! Your Mamma Norton<sup>1</sup>, your oracle, with your poor at your gates, reflecting by your ostentation on the ladies in the country, and the poor *without*, and Lovelace *within*, building up a name with one hand pulling it up with the other. Oh what a charming scheme! But your father's living will shall control your grandfather's dead one. In a word, it will be kept out of your hands till my father sees you are discreet enough to manage it or till you can dutifully by *law* tear it from him.'

'Fie!' said my aunt, 'this is not pretty.'

'O, Madam,' said I to my aunt, 'let her go on. As to revoking my estate, what hinders if I please? I know my power, but have not the least thought of exerting it. Be pleased to let my father know I would seek no relief that would be contrary to his will.'

'For that matter, child, were you to marry you must do as your husband will have you. If that husband be Mr. Lovelace he will be glad of an opportunity of embroiling the families. He is known to be a revengeful man.'

'Mr. Lovelace's threatened vengeance is in return for

<sup>1</sup> Clarissa's old nurse.

threatened vengeance. It is not everybody will bear insult as I of late have been forced to bear it.

Oh how my sister's face shone with passion.

My aunt, after a little hesitation, said, 'Consider, my dear, what confusion will be perpetuated in your family if you marry this hated Lovelace.'

'And let it be considered what misery to me, madam, if I marry that hated Solmes!'

'I will go down. I will endeavour to persuade your father to let my sister come. A happier event may then result.'

She went downstairs.

My heart fluttered with the hope and fear of seeing my mother. But she was not permitted to come. My aunt was so good as to return, not without my sister.

She said it would break the heart of my father to have it imagined he had no power over his child. 'Dearest, dearest miss,' said she, clasping her fingers, 'let me beg of you, for a hundred sakes to get over this aversion. I would kneel to you, my dearest niece—nay, I will kneel,' and down she dropped, and I with her, clasping my arms about her and bathing her bosom with my tears.

'Cannot I live single? I cannot think of giving my vows to a man I cannot endure.'

'Well, then,' rising. Bella with uplifted hands, 'I see nothing can prevail on you to oblige me.'

My aunt retired to the window, weeping, with my sister in her hand.

My sister left my aunt, and took that opportunity to insult me. Stepping to my closet she took the patterns

my mother had sent up and spread them on a chair beside me; offering one, then another, whispering, that my aunt might not hear her.

'This, Clary, is a pretty pattern. This is charming. I advise you to make your appearance in it. Won't you give orders to have the jewels set? Dear heart, how gorgeously you will be arrayed. Mamma Norton's sweet dear. Won't you have a velvet suit? It would cut a figure in a country church. Do you sigh? What, silent still? But about your laces, Clary?'

She would have gone on, had not my aunt advanced weeping.

'Let us go, madam,' said my sister. 'Let us leave the creature.'

'Permit me, madam,' said I to my aunt, sinking down, 'to detain you one moment, to thank you for your goodness to me, and to forgive me for all I have said and done amiss in your presence. One word more,' for she was going, 'speak all you can for my dear Mrs. Norton, for she is low in the world; should ill health overtake her, she may not know how to live without my mamma's favour. I shall have no means to help her for I will want necessaries before I resume my right.'

'I am glad to hear you say this,' said my aunt, 'take this, and this, my charming niece,' kissing me earnestly, and clasping her arms about my neck. 'God protect and direct you!'

I must lay down my pen. I cannot say I am pleased with all I have written.

Your C. H.

HENRY FIELDING (1707-1754) wrote his first novel, *Joseph Andrews* (1742), as a parody on Richardson's *Clarissa*. He was already known as the author of a large number of inferior

comedies, and altogether produced over twenty plays, none of which achieved any great success. In 1743 he published two volumes of *Miscellanies*, which included the *Journey from this World to the Next*, and the life of *Jonathan Wild the Great*. In 1749 his most famous novel, *Tom Jones*, appeared. The heroine, Sophia Western, is said to be a portrait of his first wife, who is painted still more faithfully and minutely in his last novel, *Amelia* (1751). Besides these he produced a large number of miscellaneous essays and papers. His last work was the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, published 1755.

### JOSEPH ANDREWS

Joseph Andrews, Lady Booby's footman, has been unjustly dismissed. He sets out to seek his fortune, and meets Fanny, to whom he is engaged to be married. Parson Adams, the curate of the parish, who is on his way to London, to see about the publication of a volume of his sermons, comes across Joseph and Fanny and takes them under his protection.

Our travellers had walked about two miles from that inn, which they had more reason to have mistaken for a castle than Don Quixote ever had any of those in which he sojourned, seeing they had met with such difficulty in escaping out of its walls, when they came to a parish, and beheld a sign of invitation hanging out. A gentleman sat smoking a pipe at the door ; of whom Adams inquired the road, and received so courteous and obliging an answer, accompanied with so smiling a countenance, that the good parson, whose heart was naturally disposed to love and affection, began to ask several other questions, particularly the name of the parish, and who was the owner of a large house whose front they then had in prospect. The gentleman answered as obligingly as before ; and as to the house, acquainted him it was his own. He then proceeded in the following manner :—

‘Sir, I presume by your habit you are a clergyman ; and as you are travelling on foot, I suppose a glass of

good beer will not be disagreeable to you ; and I can recommend my landlord's within, as some of the best in all this country. What say you, will you halt a little, and let us take a pipe together? there is no better tobacco in the kingdom.'

This proposal was not displeasing to Adams, who had allayed his thirst that day with no better liquor than what Mrs. Trulliber's cellar had produced ; and which was indeed little superior, either in richness or flavour, to that which was distilled from those grains her generous husband bestowed on his hogs. Having therefore abundantly thanked the gentleman for his kind invitation, and bid Joseph and Fanny follow him, he entered the alehouse, where a large loaf and cheese and a pitcher of beer, which truly answered the character given of it, being set before them, the three travellers fell to eating, with appetites infinitely more voracious than are to be found at the most exquisite eating-houses in the parish of St. James's.

The gentleman expressed great delight in the hearty and cheerful behaviour of Adams, and particularly in the familiarity with which he conversed with Joseph and Fanny, whom he often called his children ; a term he explained to mean no more than his parishioners ; saying, he looked on all those whom God had entrusted to his care, to stand to him in that relation. The gentleman, shaking him by the hand, highly applauded these sentiments. 'They are, indeed,' says he, 'the true principles of a Christian divine ; and I heartily wish they were universal ; but, on the contrary, I am sorry to say, the parson of our parish, instead of esteeming his poor parishioners as a part of his family, seems rather to consider them as not of the same species with himself. He seldom speaks to any, unless some few of the richest

of us ; nay, indeed, he will not move his hat to the others. I often laugh when I behold him on Sundays, strutting along the churchyard, like a turkey-cock, through rows of his parishioners, who bow to him with as much submission, and are as unregarded, as a set of servile courtiers by the proudest prince in Christendom. But if such temporal pride is ridiculous, surely the spiritual is odious and detestable ; if such a puffed-up empty human bladder, strutting in princely robes, justly moves one's derision, surely in the habit of a priest it must raise our scorn.'

'Doubtless,' answered Adams, 'your opinion is right ; but I hope such examples are rare. The clergy, whom I have the honour to know, maintain a different behaviour ; and you will allow me, sir, that the readiness which too many of the laity show to condemn the order, may be one reason of their avoiding too much humility.'—'Very true, indeed,' says the gentleman : 'I find, sir, you are a man of excellent sense, and am happy in this opportunity of knowing you ; perhaps our accidental meeting may not be disadvantageous to you neither. At present, I shall only say to you, that the incumbent of this living is old and infirm, and that it is my gift. Doctor, give me your hand ; and assure yourself of it at his decease.'

Adams told him he was never more confounded in his life, than at his utter incapacity to make any return to such noble and unmerited generosity. 'A mere trifle, sir,' cries the gentleman, 'scarce worth your acceptance : a little more than three hundred a year. I wish it was double the value for your sake.' Adams bowed, and cried from the emotions of gratitude ; when the other asked him if he was married, or had any children besides those in the spiritual sense he had mentioned.

'Sir,' replied the parson, 'I have a wife and six at your service.'—'This is unlucky,' says the gentleman ; 'for I

would otherwise have taken you into my own house as my chaplain : however, I have another in the parish (for the parsonage-house is not good enough), which I will furnish for you. Pray, does your wife understand a dairy?'—'I can't profess she does,' says Adams.—'I am sorry for it,' quoth the gentleman ; 'I would have given you half a dozen cows, and very good grounds to have maintained them.'—'Sir,' said Adams, in an ecstasy, 'you are too liberal, indeed you are.'—'Not at all,' cries the gentleman ; 'I esteem riches only as they give me an opportunity of doing good ; and I never saw one whom I had a greater inclination to serve.' At which he shook him heartily by the hand, and told him he had sufficient room in his house to entertain him and his friends.

Adams begged he might give him no such trouble ; that they could be very well accommodated in the house where they were ; forgetting they had not a sixpenny-piece among them. The gentleman would not be denied ; and informing himself how far they were travelling, he said it was too long a journey to take on foot, and begged that they would favour him, by suffering him to lend them a servant and horses ; adding withal, that if they would do him the pleasure of their company only two days, he would furnish them with his coach and six.

Adams, turning to Joseph, said, 'How lucky is this gentleman's goodness to you, who, I am afraid, would be scarce able to hold out on your lame leg?' And then, addressing the person who made him these liberal promises, after much bowing, he cried out, 'Blessed be the hour which first introduced me to a man of your charity : you are indeed a Christian of the true primitive kind, and an honour to the country wherein you live. I would willingly have taken a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to have beheld you : for the advantages which we

draw from your goodness give me little pleasure, in comparison with what I enjoy for your own sake, when I consider the treasures you are by these means laying up for yourself in a country which passes not away. We will, therefore, most generous sir, accept your goodness ; as well the entertainment you have so kindly offered us at your house this evening, as the accommodation of your horses to-morrow morning.'

He then began to search for his hat, as did Joseph for his ; and both they and Fanny were in order of departure, when the gentleman, stopping short, and seeming to meditate by himself for the space of a minute, exclaimed thus : 'Sure never anything was so unlucky ! I had forgot that my housekeeper was gone abroad, and has locked up all my rooms ; indeed, I would break them open for you, but shall not be able to furnish you with a bed ; for she has likewise put away all my linen. I am glad it entered into my head, before I had given you the trouble of walking there ; besides, I believe you will find better accommodation here than you expected. Landlord, you can provide good beds for these people, can't you ?'— 'Yes, an' please your worship,' cries the host, 'and such as no lord or justice of the peace in the kingdom need be ashamed to lie in.'— 'I am heartily sorry,' said the gentleman, 'for the disappointment. I am resolved I will never suffer her to carry away the keys again.'— 'Pray, sir, let it not make you uneasy,' cries Adams ; 'we shall do very well here ; and the loan of your horse is a favour we shall be incapable of making any return to.'— 'Aye,' said the squire, 'the horses shall attend you here, at what hour in the morning you please.'

And now, after many civilities too tedious to enumerate, many squeezes by the hand, with most affectionate looks and smiles at each other, and after appointing the horses



at seven the next morning, the gentleman took his leave of them, and departed to his own house ; Adams and his companions returned to the table, where the parson smoked another pipe, and then they all retired to rest.

Mr. Adams rose very early, and called Joseph out of his bed, between whom a very fierce dispute ensued, whether Fanny should ride behind Joseph or behind the gentleman's servant ; Joseph insisting on it that he was perfectly recovered, and was as capable of taking care of Fanny as any other person could be ; but Adams would not agree to it, and declared he would not trust her behind him ; for that he was weaker than he imagined himself to be.

This dispute continued a long time, and had begun to be very hot, when a servant arrived from their good friend, to acquaint them, that he was unfortunately prevented from lending them any horses ; for that his groom had, unknown to him, put his whole stable under a course of physic.

This advice presently struck the two disputants dumb. Adams cried out, ' Was ever anything so unlucky as this poor gentleman ! I protest I am more sorry on his account than my own. You see, Joseph, how this good-natured man is treated by his servants ; one locks up his linen, another physics his horses, and, I suppose, by his being at this house last night, the butler had locked up his cellar. Bless us ! how good-nature is used in this world ! I protest I am more concerned on his account than my own.'

' So am not I,' cries Joseph : ' not that I am much troubled about walking on foot ; all my concern is, how shall we get out of the house, unless God sends another pedlar to redeem us. But certainly this gentleman has such an affection for you, that he would lend you a larger

sum than we owe here, which is not above four or five shillings.'

'Very true, child,' answered Adams: 'I will write a letter to him, and will even venture to solicit him for three half-crowns; there will be no harm in having two or three shillings in our pockets; as we have full forty miles to travel, we may possibly have occasion for them.'

Fanny being now risen, Joseph paid her a visit, and left Adams to write his letter; which, having finished, he dispatched a boy with it to the gentleman, and then seated himself by the door, lighted his pipe, and betook himself to meditation.

The boy staying longer than seemed to be necessary, Joseph, who with Fanny was now returned to the parson, expressed some apprehensions that the gentleman's steward had locked up his purse too. To which Adams answered, it might very possibly be; and he should wonder at no liberties which the devil might put into the head of a wicked servant to take with so worthy a master; but added, that as the sum was so small, so noble a gentleman would be easily able to procure it in the parish, though he had it not in his own pocket. 'Indeed,' says he, 'if it was four or five guineas, or any such large quantity of money, it might be a different matter.'

They were now sat down to breakfast, over some toast and ale, when the boy returned, and informed them that the gentleman was not at home. 'Very well,' cries Adams; 'but why, child, did you not stay till his return? Go back again, my good boy, and wait for his coming home; he cannot be gone far, as his horses are all sick; and, besides, he had no intention to go abroad, for he invited us to spend this day and to-morrow at his house. Therefore go back, child, and tarry till his return home.'

The messenger departed, and was back again with

great expedition, bringing an account that the gentleman was gone a long journey, and would not be at home again this month. At these words, Adams seemed greatly confounded, saying, 'This must be a sudden accident, as the sickness or death of a relation, or some such unforeseen misfortune ;' and then turning to Joseph, cried, 'I wish you had reminded me to have borrowed this money last night.'

Joseph, smiling, answered, he was very much deceived if the gentleman would not have found some excuse to avoid lending it. 'I own,' says he, 'I was never much pleased with his professing so much kindness for you at first sight ; for I have heard the gentlemen of our cloth, in London, tell many such stories of their masters ; but when the boy brought the message back of his not being at home, I presently knew what would follow ; for whenever a man of fashion does not care to fulfil his promises, the custom is, to order his servants that he will never be seen at home to the person so promised. In London, they call it denying him ; I have myself denied Sir Thomas Booby above a hundred times ; and when the man has danced attendance for about a month, or sometimes longer, he is acquainted, in the end, that the gentleman is gone out of town, and could do nothing in the business.'

'Good Lord !' says Adams, 'what wickedness is there in the Christian world ! I profess, almost equal to what I have read of the heathens. But surely, Joseph, your suspicions of this gentleman must be unjust ; for what a silly fellow must he be, who would do the devil's work for nothing ; and canst thou tell me any interest he could possibly propose to himself by deceiving us in his professions ?'

'It is not for me,' answered Joseph, 'to give reasons

for what men do, to a gentleman of your learning.'—'You say right,' quoth Adams; 'knowledge of men is only to be learned from books: Plato and Seneca for that: and those are authors, I am afraid, child, you never read.'—'Not I, sir, truly,' answered Joseph; 'all I know is, it is a maxim among the gentlemen of our cloth, that those masters who promise the most perform the least; and I have often heard them say, they have found the largest vails in those families where they were not promised any. But, sir, instead of considering any farther these matters, it would be our wisest way to contrive some method of getting out of this house; for the generous gentleman, instead of doing us any service, has left us the whole reckoning to pay.'

LAURENCE STERNE (1713-1768) was Vicar of Sutton-in-the-Forest, near York. The first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy* appeared in 1759, and created a sensation. Sterne suddenly found himself famous, and moved to London to enjoy his triumph. In 1760 he published two volumes of *Sermons by Mr. Yorick*, of which it has been said that the preacher was 'often tottering on the verge of laughter and ready to throw his periwig in the face of his audience', and in 1761 came the next four volumes of *Tristram Shandy*. In 1762 he went abroad for his health, and settled for some time at Toulouse. He returned to England in 1764, and finished the seventh and eighth volumes of *Tristram*. His health failed again, and in 1765 he went for the tour in France which resulted in the *Sentimental Journey* (1768). The last volume of *Tristram* appeared in 1767, in company with two new volumes of sermons.

### TRISTRAM SHANDY

'WHEN Tom, an' please your honour, got to the shop, there was nobody in it but a poor negro girl, with a bunch of white feathers slightly tied to the end of a long cane, flapping away flies, not killing them.'—'Tis a pretty

picture,' said my Uncle Toby, 'she had suffered persecution, Trim, and learned mercy.'

'She was good, an' please your honour, from nature as well as from hardships ; and there are circumstances in the story of that poor friendless slut that would melt a heart of stone,' said Trim, 'and some dismal winter's evening, when your honour is in the humour, they shall be told you with the rest of Tom's story, for it makes a part of it.'

'Then do not forget, Trim,' said my Uncle Toby.

'A negro has a soul ? an' please your honour,' said the Corporal (doubtingly).

'I am not much versed, Corporal,' quoth my Uncle Toby, 'in things of that kind ; but, I suppose, God would not leave him without one, any more than thee or me.'

'It would be putting one sadly over the head of another,' quoth the Corporal.

'It would be so,' said my Uncle Toby.

'Why then, an' please your honour, is a black wench to be used worse than a white one ?'

'I can give no reason,' said my Uncle Toby.

'Only,' cried the Corporal, shaking his head, 'because she has no one to stand up for her.'

'Tis that very thing, Trim,' quoth my Uncle Toby, 'which recommends her to protection, and her brethren with her. 'Tis the fortune of war which has put the whip into her hands now ; where it may be hereafter, Heaven knows. But be it where it will, the brave, Trim, will not use it unkindly.'

'God forbid,' said the Corporal.

'Amen,' responded my Uncle Toby, laying his hand upon his heart.

The Corporal returned to his story and went on, but with an embarrassment in doing it which here and there

a reader in this world will not be able to comprehend ; for by the many sudden transitions all along, from one kind and cordial passion to another, in getting thus far on his way, he had lost the sportable key of his voice which gave sense and spirit to his tale. He attempted twice to resume it, but could not please himself ; so giving a stout hem to rally back the retreating spirits, and aiding Nature at the same time with his left arm akimbo on one side, and with his right a little extended, supporting her on the other, the Corporal got as near the note as he could, and in that attitude continued his story.

‘As Tom, an’ please your honour, had no business at that time with the Moorish girl, he passed on into the room beyond to talk to the Jew’s widow about love and his pound of sausages ; and being, as I had told your honour, an open, cheery-hearted lad, with his character wrote in his looks and carriage, he took a chair, and without much apology, but with great civility at the same time, placed it close to her at the table, and sat down.

‘There is nothing so awkward as courting a woman, an’ please your honour, whilst she is making sausages. So Tom began a discourse upon them : first gravely, as “How they were made, with what meat, herbs, and spices” ; then a little gaily, as “With what skins, and if they never burst, whether the largest were not the best,” and so on ; taking care only as he went along to season what he had to say upon sausages rather under than over, that he might have room to act in.’

‘It was owing to the neglect of that very precaution,’ said my Uncle Toby, laying his hand upon Trim’s shoulder, ‘that Count de la Motte lost the battle of Wynendale ; he pressed too speedily into the wood ; which if he had not done, Lisle had not fallen into our hands, nor Ghent and

Bruges, which both followed her example. It was so late in the year,' continued my Uncle Toby, 'and so terrible a season came on, that if things had not fallen out as they did, our troops must have perished in the open field.'

'Why therefore may not battles, an' please your honour, as well as marriages, be made in Heaven?' My Uncle Toby mused.

Religion inclined him to say one thing, and his high idea of military skill tempted him to say another; so not being able to frame a reply exactly to his mind, my Uncle Toby said nothing at all; and the Corporal finished his story.

'As Tom perceived, an' please your honour, that he gained ground, and that all he had said upon the subject of sausages was kindly taken, he went on to help her a little in making them. First, by taking hold of the ring of the sausage, whilst she stroked the forced meat down with her hand, then by cutting the strings into proper lengths and holding them in his hand, whilst she took them out one by one; then by putting them across her mouth, that she might take them out as she wanted them; and so on from little to more, till at last he adventured to tie the sausage himself whilst she held the snout.

'Now a widow, an' please your honour, always chooses a second husband as unlike the first as she can; so the affair was more than half settled in her mind before Tom mentioned it.

'She made a feint, however, of defending herself by snatching up a sausage. Tom instantly laid hold of another.

'She signed the capitulation, and Tom sealed it, and there was an end of the matter.'

HORACE WALPOLE, Earl of Orford (1717-1797), was the fourth son of Sir Robert Walpole. At Eton he formed a close friendship with Gray, with whom he afterwards travelled abroad. He became noted as a patron of art and literature, and his house at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, contained a private printing press. *The Castle of Otranto, a Gothic Romance*, which professed to be a translation from the Italian, was issued in 1764. In the preface to the second edition Walpole confessed that he was the author. In 1769 Chatterton sent him certain sham antique documents, and Walpole seemed at first inclined to help him, but nothing came of the affair. Besides his one novel, he wrote a number of occasional essays and skits; a few plays, of which the best is *The Mysterious Mother*; *Anecdotes of Painting*; and some volumes of letters, which are among the most famous in the language.

### THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO

MANFRED, Prince of Otranto, had one son and one daughter: the latter a most beautiful virgin, aged eighteen, was called Matilda. Conrad, the son, was three years younger, a homely youth, sickly, and of no promising disposition; yet he was the darling of his father, who never showed any symptoms of affection to Matilda. Manfred had contracted a marriage for his son with the Marquis of Vicenza's daughter, Isabella; and she had already been delivered by her guardians into the hands of Manfred, that he might celebrate the wedding as soon as Conrad's infirm state of health would permit. Manfred's impatience for this ceremonial was remarked by his family and neighbours. The former, indeed, apprehending the severity of their prince's disposition, did not dare to utter their surmises on this precipitation. Hippolita, his wife, an amiable lady, did sometimes venture to represent the danger of marrying their only son so early, considering his great youth and greater infirmities; but she never received any other



answer than reflections on her own sterility, who had given him but one heir. His tenants and subjects were less cautious in their discourses: they attributed this hasty wedding to the prince's dread of seeing accomplished an ancient prophecy, which was said to have pronounced, that the Castle and Lordship of Otranto should pass from the present family whenever the real owner should be grown too large to inhabit it. It was difficult to make any sense of this prophecy; and still less easy to conceive what it had to do with the marriage in question. Yet these mysteries, or contradictions, did not make the populace adhere the less to their opinion.

Young Conrad's birthday was fixed for his espousals. The company was assembled in the chapel of the castle, and everything ready for beginning the divine office, when Conrad himself was missing. Manfred, impatient of the least delay, and who had not observed his son retire, dispatched one of his attendants to summon the young prince. The servant, who had not stayed long enough to have crossed the court to Conrad's apartment, came running back breathless, in a frantic manner, his eyes staring, and foaming at the mouth. He said nothing, but pointed to the court. The company were struck with terror and amazement. The princess Hippolita, without knowing what was the matter, but anxious for her son, swooned away. Manfred, less apprehensive than enraged at the procrastination of the nuptials, and at the folly of his domestic, asked imperiously what was the matter? The fellow made no answer, but continued pointing towards the court-yard; and at last, after repeated questions put to him, cried out, 'Oh! the helmet! the helmet!' In the meantime some of the company had run into the court, from whence was heard a confused noise of shrieks, horror, and surprise. Manfred, who began to be alarmed

at not seeing his son, went himself to get information of what occasioned this strange confusion. Matilda remained, endeavouring to assist her mother, and Isabella stayed for the same purpose, and to avoid showing any impatience for the bridegroom, for whom, in truth, she had conceived little affection.

The first thing that struck Manfred's eyes was a group of his servants endeavouring to raise something that appeared to him a mountain of sable plumes. He gazed without believing his sight. 'What are ye doing?' cried Manfred, wrathfully: 'where is my son?' A volley of voices replied, 'Oh! my lord! the prince! the prince! the helmet! the helmet!' Shocked with these lamentable sounds, and dreading he knew not what, he advanced hastily,—but what a sight for a father's eyes! he beheld his child dashed to pieces, and almost buried under an enormous helmet, a hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being, and shaded with a proportionable quantity of black feathers.

The horror of the spectacle, the ignorance of all around how this misfortune had happened, and, above all, the tremendous phenomenon before him, took away the prince's speech. Yet his silence lasted longer than even grief could occasion. He fixed his eyes on what he wished in vain to believe a vision; and seemed less attentive to his loss than buried in meditation on the stupendous object that had occasioned it. He touched, he examined the fatal casque; nor could even the bleeding mangled remains of the young prince divert the eyes of Manfred from the portent before him. All who had known his partial fondness for young Conrad were as much surprised at their prince's insensibility as thunder-struck themselves at the miracle of the helmet. They conveyed the disfigured corpse into the hall, without

receiving the least direction from Manfred. As little was he attentive to the ladies who remained in the chapel: on the contrary, without mentioning the unhappy princesses, his wife and daughter, the first sounds that dropped from Manfred's lips were, 'Take care of the lady Isabella.'

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728-1774). For biographical details see Chapter VI, p. 144.

### THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

TOWARDS the end of the week, we received a card from the town ladies; in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning, I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me, with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendour the next day. In the evening, they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus: 'I fancy, Charles, my dear, we shall have a good company at our church to-morrow.' 'Perhaps we may, my dear,' returned I; 'though you need be under no uneasiness about that: you shall have a sermon, whether there be or not.' 'That is what I expect,' returned she; 'but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible; for who knows what may happen?' 'Your precautions,' replied I, 'are highly commendable. A decent behaviour and appearance in church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene.' 'Yes,' cried she, 'I know that; but I mean, we should go there in as proper a manner as possible, not altogether like the scrubs about us.' 'You are quite right, my dear,' returned I,

‘and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going, is to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins.’ ‘Phoo, Charles,’ interrupted she, ‘all that is very true, but not what I would be at; I mean, we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off; and I protest I don’t like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew, all blowzed and red with walking, and looking for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this: there are our two plough-horses, the colt that has been in the family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry, that have scarce done an earthly thing for this month past, and are both grown fat and lazy. Why should not they do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little, they will not be so contemptible.’

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broke to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition: but as I found it would be a business of much time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but, not finding them come so speedily as I expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I

therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two ; and when got about half-way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward, towards the church ; my son, my wife, and the two little ones, exalted upon one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay ; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next, the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. It was just recovering from this dismal situation that I found them : but perceiving everything safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it might give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE NATURE-POETRY

WE have seen that the main force of our eighteenth-century literature was concentrated on the study of man, and that its most typical forms of expression are the satire, the periodic essay, and the novel of manners and incident. Side by side with this there grew, tentatively at first and with little recognition, a movement towards the appreciation of the beauties of Nature. Thomson's *Spring* was published in 1726, the same year as *Gulliver*, and the rest of the *Seasons* were completed by 1730. Within the next twenty years followed Shenstone, Akenside, Collins, and the earlier poems of Gray; Goldsmith's *Traveller* appeared in 1765, and his *Deserted Village* in 1770; thirteen years later Crabbe began his tales of country life and his descriptions of country scenery. It was all as yet sporadic and intermittent, the work not of a school but of a few isolated observers; yet as the century progressed it gathered in depth and intensity, and so bore its part in preparing the way for Wordsworth.

Thomson, if the parallel be not fantastic, has something in common with Pepys: the same child-like interest, the same delight in every detail of the panorama. He has little reflection, little insight, but he enjoys everything, and he calls on us frankly and openly to share his enjoyment. All comes alike to him: the birds in the hedgerow, the sunset, the sheep-shearers across the meadow, the fisherman poising his fly from the brookside; he stops to look at them all, and touches our elbow that we may miss no detail of the scene. Sometimes, it is true,

he fails in sense of proportion: a poet of greater tact would not have celebrated the worm or the robin with such pomp of blank verse; but he has a seeing eye and a kindly temper, and if we sometimes smile at his echoes of Milton we are more often pleased with his good-natured and garrulous companionship. One point in his work deserves to be specially noted—the feeling for animals not merely as the victims or drudges of human needs, but as creatures with lives of their own and rights which deserve respect. It is not as yet clearly phrased: but it carries forward a tradition of English character which we may find gradually developed in Gray, in Christopher Smart (see the stanzas quoted in the present chapter), and in the whole lyric poetry of Blake.

There is no need to trace in detail the further advance of this early Nature-poetry. Collins's Ode is as still and quiet as evening itself, full of atmosphere and sober colouring and a great peace. Gray, tender, scholarly, exquisitely felicitous in phrase, describes his country churchyard with a deeper and more human insight. In the opening stanza of his *Elegy* we may catch the actual transition: the first three lines are pure landscape, the fourth adds a touch of personal feeling and romance. Christopher Smart's hymn is impossible to classify: it is as much an exception in its period as it was in its author's life; indeed, it was altogether excluded, by a timorous publisher, from the first edition of his poems. It is a series of remarkable *vignettes*, some odd, some audacious, some extremely beautiful and suggestive; and it deserves a far higher reputation than has customarily been accorded to it. With Goldsmith and Crabbe we return again to description, but it is drawn from another point of view. Nature is now definitely a background, the setting of a human situation or story; the whole scene is

in a sense moralized; the details are chosen for dramatic or pathetic effect.

The difference between this kind of Nature-poetry and that of the Lake School is briefly that in this earlier period 'the landscape', to use Mr. Stopford Brooke's phrase, 'has no sentiment of its own'. It is either described simply from outside as a set of pictures—that is Thomson's way—or it derives its sentiment from its relation to human beings, as is the way of Crabbe and Goldsmith. Crabbe, for instance, tells the story of a lover riding twice through the same country scene, once in hope, once in dejection, and depicts the lanes and meadows in corresponding tone, gay in the one case, sombre in the other. He does not attempt to penetrate into Nature herself; he sees her, as the tale requires, through the eyes of his hero. The 'few torn shrubs' in Goldsmith are placed to emphasize the pathos of the deserted parsonage. They are seen clearly and justly, but the interpretation comes from outside. Of course the whole matter is too large to be embraced in any single formula; Collins reaches forward to Coleridge as Smart reaches forward to Blake; but as a matter of general tendency the distinction is true. It is not until the Lake Poets that Nature becomes directly and in herself 'the garment by which we see God'.

JAMES THOMSON (1700-1748) was Scotch by birth, though he spent the greater part of his life in England. He began to write before he was twenty, but it was not until 1726 that he first made his mark with *Winter*. The remaining seasons followed: *Summer* (1727), *Spring* (1728), and finally *The Seasons* (1730). In 1730 his first play, *Sophonisba*, was produced at Drury Lane, and he afterwards tried his hand at drama more than once, but with no success. He composed several minor poems, including 'Rule Britannia' (1740), and in 1748 came the second of his two great works, *The Castle of Indolence: an Allegorical Poem*, written in burlesque imitation of the Spenserian



stanza. *The Seasons* produced a great effect not only in England, but in France. Voltaire praised it, Montesquieu raised a monument to its author, and Madame Roland repeated stanzas of it in prison.

### SPRING

Now when the first foul torrent of the brooks  
 Swelled with the vernal rains, is ebbd away,  
 And whitening down their mossy-tinctured stream 380  
 Descends the billowy foam—now is the time,  
 While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,  
 To tempt the trout. The well-dissembled fly,  
 The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,  
 Snatched from the hoary steed the floating line,  
 And all thy slender watery stores prepare.  
 But let not on thy hook the tortured worm  
 Convulsive twist in agonizing folds ;  
 Which, by rapacious hunger swallowed deep,  
 Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast 390  
 Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,  
 Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

When with his lively ray the potent sun  
 Has pierced the streams, and roused the finny race,  
 Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair ;  
 Chief should the western breezes curling play,  
 And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.  
 High to their fount, this day, amid the hills  
 And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks ;  
 The next, pursue their rocky-channelled maze 400  
 Down to the river, in whose ample wave  
 Their little naiads love to sport at large.  
 Just in the dubious point where with the pool  
 Is mixed the trembling stream, or where it boils  
 Around the stone, or from the hollowed bank  
 Reverted plays in undulating flow,  
 There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly ;

And, as you lead it round in artful curve,  
With eye attentive mark the springing game.  
Straight as above the surface of the flood 410  
They wanton rise, or urged by hunger leap,  
Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook,—  
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,  
And to the shelving shore slow-dragging some,  
With various hand proportioned to their force.  
If yet too young, and easily deceived,  
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,  
Him, piteous of his youth and the short space  
He has enjoyed the vital light of heaven,  
Soft disengage, and back into the stream 420  
The speckled infant throw. But should you lure  
From his dark haunt beneath the tangled roots  
Of pendent trees the monarch of the brook,  
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.  
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly ;  
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft  
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.  
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun  
Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death  
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along, 430  
Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthened line ;  
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,  
The caverned bank, his old secure abode ;  
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,  
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,  
That feels him still, yet to his furious course  
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now  
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage ;  
Till, floating broad upon his breathless side,  
And to his fate abandoned, to the shore 440  
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

WILLIAM COLLINS (1721-1759) was the son of a hatter at Chichester. In 1742, while an undergraduate at Oxford, he published his *Persian Eclogues*, afterwards republished as *Oriental Eclogues*. In December, 1746, appeared a volume of Odes, including the 'Ode to Evening'. He planned several tragedies, but was too indolent to work at them. His chief friend was the poet Thomson, on whose death he wrote one of his finest odes (published 1749). He continued to produce occasional odes and short poems, one of the best known being the 'Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands'. The first edition of his collected works appeared in 1765.

### ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,  
 May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,  
     Like thy own solemn springs,  
     Thy springs and dying gales ;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-hair'd sun  
 Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,  
     With brede ethereal wove,  
     O'erhang his wavy bed :

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat  
 With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,   10  
     Or where the beetle winds  
     His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises, 'midst the twilight path  
 Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :  
     Now teach me, maid composed,  
     To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,  
 May not unseemly with its stillness suit,  
     As, musing slow, I hail  
     Thy genial loved return !                                   20

For when thy folding-star arising shows  
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp  
The fragrant hours, and elves  
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,  
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,  
The pensive pleasures sweet,  
Prepare thy shadowy car :

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake  
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallow'd pile, 30  
Or upland fallows grey  
Reflect its last cool gleam.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,  
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut  
That from the mountain's side  
Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,  
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all  
Thy dewy fingers draw  
The gradual dusky veil. 40

While Spring shall pour his show'rs, as oft he wont  
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!  
While Summer loves to sport  
Beneath thy lingering light ;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,  
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,  
Affrights thy shrinking train,  
And rudely rends thy robes :

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,  
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipp'd Health, 50  
Thy gentlest influence own,  
And hymn thy favourite name !

THOMAS GRAY (1716-1771) was educated at Eton and Cambridge. He left without taking a degree, but after some years returned, became LL.B., and settled in the town. His most intimate friend was West, whose death, in 1742, called forth Gray's only sonnet. In the same year he published his 'Ode on a distant prospect of Eton College'. The 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard' appeared in 1751, having already been circulated in manuscript. 'The Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard' were published in 1758. In 1768 two editions of his poems appeared, containing his poems on Norse mythology. In 1769 he visited the English Lakes, and the journal in which he described the Lake district was published after his death. He also wrote a large number of letters, which were collected and published.

### ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r  
The moping owl does to the moon complain      10  
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
 The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,  
 The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
 No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed. 20

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
 Or busy housewife ply her evening care:  
 No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:  
 How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
 How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure; 30  
 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,  
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
 Await alike th' inevitable hour:  
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault  
 If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
 Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise. 40

Can storied urn or animated bust  
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
 Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire; 45  
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,  
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll 50  
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,  
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,  
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood. 60

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes—  
Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;  
Forbade to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;  
The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame, 70  
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride  
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife  
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray ;  
Along the cool, sequester'd vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect  
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,  
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh. 80

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,  
The place of fame and elegy supply :  
And many a holy text around she strews,  
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ; 90  
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,  
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;  
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,  
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away  
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn. 100

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,  
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,  
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love. ,

'One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,  
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ; 110  
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,  
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he :



'The next with dirges due in sad array  
 Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.  
 Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay  
 Graved on the stonie beneath yon aged thorn :'

## THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth  
 A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown.  
 Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,  
 And Melancholy mark'd him for her own. 120

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
 Heav'n did a recompense as largely send :  
 He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,  
 He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,  
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose,)  
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

CHRISTOPHER SMART (1722-1771) showed early promise of genius, but was noted for his wildness and extravagance. He wrote a comedy, *A Trip to Cambridge, or the Grateful Fair*, which was acted by the undergraduates (1747) but never printed. In 1750 he published a satire in imitation of Horace, under the pseudonym of Ebenezer Pentweazle. The next year he was for a short time in a madhouse. On his recovery he lived for some time by journalism and by writing poems and satires. In 1756 he published a prose translation of Horace, but for the most part he did only hack-work. In 1763 he was once more in Bedlam, and it is said that the 'Song to David' (published in the autumn of 1763) was written 'partly with charcoal on the walls, or indented with a key on the panels of his cell'. Smart continued to write, but produced nothing else of any importance. His later works were for the most part devotional.

## SONG TO DAVID

For Adoration seasons change  
 And order, truth, and beauty range,  
     Adjust, attract, and fill :  
 The grass the polyanthus cheques ;  
 And polished porphyry reflects  
     By the descending rill.

. . . . .  
 The laurels with the winter strive ;  
 The crocus burnishes alive  
     Upon the snow-clad earth.  
 For Adoration myrtles stay  
 To keep the garden from dismay  
     And bless the sight from dearth.

10

. . . . .  
 The cheerful holly, pensive yew,  
 And holy thorn, their trim renew ;  
     The squirrel hoards his nuts :  
 All creatures batten o'er their stores,  
 And careful nature all her doors  
     For Adoration shuts.

. . . . .  
 For Adoration, beyond match  
 The scholar bullfinch aims to catch  
     The soft flute's every touch ;  
 And careless on the hazel spray  
 The daring redbreast keeps at bay  
     The damsel's greedy clutch.

20

. . . . .  
 For Adoration in the dome  
 Of Christ the sparrows find a home  
     And on his olives perch :

The swallow also-dwells with thee,  
 O man of God's humility,  
 Within his Saviour's Church.

80

Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,  
 The Shepherd King upon his knees  
 For his momentous trust ;  
 With wish of infinite conceit,  
 For man, beast, mute, the small and great,  
 And prostrate dust to dust.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728-1774). For biographical details  
 see Chapter VI, p. 144.

### THE DESERTED VILLAGE

BESIDE yon straggling fence that skirts the way,  
 With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,  
 There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,  
 The village master taught his little school ;  
 A man severe he was, and stern to view ;  
 I knew him well, and every truant knew ;  
 Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace  
 The day's disasters in his morning face ;  
 Full well they laugh'd, with counterfeited glee,  
 At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;  
 Full well the busy whisper, circling round,  
 Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd  
 Yet he was kind ; or if severe in aught,  
 The love he bore to learning was in fault ;  
 The village all declar'd how much he knew ;  
 'Twas certain he could write, and cypher too ;  
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
 And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.  
 In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,  
 For e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still ;  
 While words of learned length and thund'ring sound

200

210

Amazed the gazing rustics rang'd around,  
And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,  
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot  
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.  
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,  
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye, 220  
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,  
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retir'd,  
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,  
And news much older than their ale went round.  
Imagination fondly stoops to trace  
The parlour splendours of that festive place ;  
The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,  
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door ;  
The chest contriv'd a double debt to pay,  
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day ; 230  
The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,  
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose ;  
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,  
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay ;  
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,  
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain, transitory splendours ! Could not all  
Reprive the tottering mansion from its fall !  
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart  
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart ; 240  
Thither no more the peasant shall repair  
To sweet oblivion of his daily care ;  
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,  
No more the wood-man's ballad shall prevail ;  
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,  
Relax his pond'rous strength, and lean to hear ;

The host himself no longer shall be found  
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round ;  
 Nor the coy maid, half willing to be press'd,  
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

250

GEORGE CRABBE (1754-1832) practised for some time as a surgeon. His early works are didactic and satiric, and were not received with any warmth. He was in great straits for money, and at last applied to Burke, who, although a total stranger to him, at once took up his cause, and persuaded Dodsley to publish *The Library* (1781). In December of the same year, acting on Burke's advice, he took Orders, and in 1782 he was made chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. In 1783 appeared *The Village*, and in 1784 *The Newspaper*. Twenty years of silence followed. Crabbe wrote voluminously, but he and his children periodically burnt his manuscripts. He began *The Parish Register* in 1798, and published it in 1806. *The Borough* appeared in 1810, *Tales in Verse* in 1812, and *Tales of the Hall* in 1819. Crabbe also wrote a few shorter poems of no great importance.

*The Village* was written as a deliberate antithesis to Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. Crabbe's realism was always of a somewhat pessimistic temper.

### THE BOROUGH

VIEW now the Winter-storm ! above, one cloud,  
 Black and unbroken, all the skies o'ershroud :  
 Th' unwieldy porpoise through the day before  
 Had roll'd in view of boding men on shore ;  
 And sometimes hid and sometimes show'd his form,  
 Dark as the cloud, and furious as the storm.

All where the eye delights, yet dreads to roam,  
 The breaking billows cast the flying foam  
 Upon the billows rising—all the deep  
 Is restless change ; the waves so swell'd and steep,      10  
 Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,  
 Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells :  
 But nearer land you may the billows trace,

As if contending in their watery chase ;  
 May watch the mightiest till the shoal they reach,  
 Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch ;  
 Curl'd as they come, they strike with furious force,  
 And then re-flowing, take their grating course  
 Raking the rounded flints, which ages past  
 Roll'd by their rage, and shall to ages last. 20

Far off the Petrel in the troubled way  
 Swims with her brood, or flutters in the spray ;  
 She rises often, often drops again,  
 And sports at ease on the tempestuous main.

High o'er the restless deep, above the reach  
 Of gunner's hope, vast flights of Wild-ducks stretch ;  
 Far as the eye can glance on either side,  
 In a broad space and level line they glide ;  
 All in their wedge-like figures from the north,  
 Day after day, flight after flight, go forth. 30

In-shore their passage tribes of Sea-gulls urge,  
 And drop for prey within the sweeping surge ;  
 Oft in the rough opposing blast they fly  
 Far back, then turn, and all their force apply,  
 While to the storm they give their weak complaining cry ;  
 Or clap the sleek white pinion to the breast,  
 And in the restless ocean dip for rest.

Darkness begins to reign ; the louder wind  
 Appals the weak and awes the firmer mind ;  
 But frights not him, whom evening and the spray 40  
 In part conceal—yon Prowler on his way :  
 Lo ! he has something seen ; he runs apace,  
 As if he fear'd companion in the chase ;  
 He sees his prize, and now he turns again,  
 Slowly and sorrowing—' Was your search in vain ?'  
 Gruffly he answers, ' 'Tis a sorry sight !  
 A seaman's body : there'll be more to-night !'

Hark ! to those sounds ! they're from distress at sea :  
How quick they come ! What terrors may there be !  
Yes, 'tis a driven vessel : I discern 50  
Lights, signs of terror, gleaming from the stern ;  
Others behold them too, and from the town  
In various parties seamen hurry down ;  
Their wives pursue, and damsels urged by dread,  
Lest men so dear be into danger led ;  
Their head the gown has hooded, and their call  
In this sad night is piercing like the squall ;  
They feel their kinds of power, and when they meet,  
Chide, fondle, weep, dare, threaten, or entreat.

See one poor girl, all terror and alarm, 60  
Has fondly seized upon her lover's arm ;  
'Thou shalt not venture ;' and he answers 'No !  
I will not : '—still she cries, 'Thou shalt not go.'

No need of this ; not here the stoutest boat  
Can through such breakers, o'er such billows float,  
Yet may they view these lights upon the beach,  
Which yield them hope, whom help can never reach.

From parted clouds the moon her radiance throws  
On the wild waves, and all the danger shows ;  
But shows them beaming in her shining vest, 70  
Terrific splendour ! gloom in glory dress'd !  
This for a moment, and then clouds again  
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign.

But hear we not those sounds ? Do lights appear ?  
I see them not ! the storm alone I hear :  
And lo ! the sailors homeward take their way ;  
Man must endure—let us submit and pray.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FORERUNNERS

BETWEEN 1780 and 1791 Mozart was bringing into music a new kind of imaginative power, a 'sweet and serious earnest', a sense of the infinite significance of things, which gives to his latest compositions a special depth and poignance. In his G-minor quintet, in his *Ave Verum*, in his unfinished *Requiem* we approach a new chapter in the history of musical art; the page was to be turned by the hand of Beethoven, but it was the hand of Mozart that prepared for the turning. During the same years a similar change took place in English poetry; a similar preparation for the supremely imaginative work of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Blake's *Poetical Sketches* were printed in 1783, Cowper's *Task* in 1785, Burns's first poem in 1786; in 1798 appeared the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Of the three forerunners Blake exercised at the time the least influence. He was flouted as a madman, his mysticism was ridiculed, his poetry was decried, his engravings were cynically dismissed as 'good to steal from'; not until our own day has he come to his reputation and been acknowledged at his true value. His exquisite sensitive genius is too delicate for the hand of criticism: you must take it and be enriched or leave it and be impoverished. He was in no sense a learned poet: his vocabulary was small, his knowledge limited, his ear not always perfectly trained. But his inspiration is at the centre, it comes white-hot from the celestial flame, it burns to ashes all cavil and all censure. His *Edward III* contains lines which no other man but



Shakespeare could have written; his lyrics could have been written by no one else in the world. We hardly think of his soul as inhabiting this common earth; it has been caught into the seventh heaven, and has there heard unspeakable words. What wonder if he sometimes speaks to us with stammering lips! His message was not delivered to him in the language of everyday utterance.

Cowper approaches that frontier in a very different frame of mind. His early work was light, playful, occasional; at one time it seemed as though he would be satisfied to wear the laurels of Prior. Then came the blinding flash of religious emotion which altered the whole course of his life, and which expressed itself now in exaltation, now in gentle and tender patience, now in the blackness of despair. There are passages in *The Task* which read like prophecy; there are stanzas in *The Castaway* which read like the cry of a lost soul. All the work that he wrote at Olney is touched by this influence; the commonplace descriptions are moments of relief, the humour is the smile of a sick man who holds to life by a slender thread; if he recalls his old vein it is to describe his pets or to blame some current abuse. In our strenuous times his poetry, except at its highest moments, may appear languid and infirm: it did not appear so to his contemporaries. 'Nay, mamma,' says the heroine of *Sense and Sensibility*, 'if he is not to be animated by Cowper'—and the rest is eloquent silence.

Blake and Cowper stand at the edge of the unknown world: the one in splendid confidence, the other with bowed head and beating heart. Robert Burns is not a saint of either kind, but a poet of human frailties and human emotions. His religion is the staid sober worship of the *Cotter's Saturday Night*; he is no mystic, no enthusiast, he has no taste for abstract problems or ascetic practice. His

great gifts, apart from the flawless perfection of his lyric poems, are a wide sympathy with all things weak and suffering, a keen and deadly satire, especially of hypocrisy or pretentiousness, and above all such power of genuine passion as no love-poet except Heine has ever manifested. At his touch conventions and unrealities crumble away, and the soul of man in its most intimate affections of joy and sorrow stands revealed before our gaze.

NOTE — Among other poets who preceded or overlapped the work of the Lake School must be mentioned Thomas Chatterton (1752–1770), whose brief career revealed a genius that he did not live to develop, and Samuel Rogers (1762–1855), a frigid and elegant writer, the whole of whose principal writings fall between 1786 and 1828. During the same period a more natural note was being struck in English comedy by the successors of Goldsmith, Colman, Foote, and, above all, R. B. Sheridan.

WILLIAM COWPER (1731–1800) was educated at Westminster, and in 1749 entered at the Middle Temple. During his residence there he wrote a good deal of occasional poetry and some translations, including one of Voltaire's *Henriade*. In 1763 he was attacked with religious melancholy, and obliged to give up all thoughts of a public career. In 1765 he became an inmate of the Unwin's home at Huntington, and in 1767 accompanied them to Olney, where he resided until the death of Unwin in 1786. From that date to 1800 he lived partly at Weston and partly at East Dereham. His principal work was the *Olney Hymns* (1771–9), *John Gilpin* (1782), *The Task* (1783–5), *Translation of Homer* (1785–91), *Lines on my Mother's Picture* (1790), and *The Castaway* (1799). His name was mentioned for the office of Poet Laureate in 1790, and in 1794, the year of his last and most serious attack, he was granted a pension of £300 a year by the Government.

## THE WINTER EVENING

OH Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,  
 Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,  
 Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks  
 Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows  
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,  
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne  
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,  
 But urg'd by storms along its slipp'ry way,  
 I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,  
 And dreaded as thou art ! Thou hold'st the sun 10  
 A pris'ner in the yet undawning east,  
 Short'ning his journey between morn and noon,  
 And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,  
 Down to the rosy west ; but kindly still  
 Compensating his loss with added hours  
 Of social converse and instructive ease,  
 And gath'ring, at short notice, in one group  
 The family dispers'd, and fixing thought,  
 Not less dispers'd by day-light and its cares.  
 I crown thee king of intimate delights, 20  
 Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness,  
 And all the comforts that the lowly roof  
 Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours  
 Of long uninterrupted ev'ning, know.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE  
OUT OF NORFOLK

## THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANN BODHAM

OH that those lips had language ! Life has pass'd  
 With me but roughly since I heard thee last.  
 Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smiles I see,  
 The same that oft in childhood solaced me ;

Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say,  
' Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away !'  
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes  
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,  
The art that baffles time's tyrannic claim  
To quench it) here shines on me still the same. 10

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,  
Oh welcome guest, though unexpected, here !  
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,  
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,  
I will obey, not willingly alone,  
But gladly, as the precept were her own ;  
And, while that face renews my filial grief,  
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief—  
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,  
A momentary dream, that thou art she. 20

My mother ! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,  
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?  
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,  
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?  
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss ;  
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—  
Ah that maternal smile ! it answers—Yes.  
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,  
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,  
And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew 30  
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu !  
But was it such ?—It was.—Where thou art gone  
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.  
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,  
The parting sound shall pass my lips no more !  
Thy maidens griev'd themselves at my concern,  
Oft gave me promise of a quick return.  
What ardently I wish'd, I long believ'd,

And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd ;  
By disappointment every day beguil'd, 40  
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.

Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,  
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,  
I learn'd at last submission to my lot ;  
But, though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,  
Children not thine have trod my nurs'ry floor  
And where the gard'ner Robin, day by day,  
Drew me to school along the public way,  
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapt 50  
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capt,  
'Tis now become a history little known,  
That once we call'd the past'ral house our own.  
Short-liv'd possession ! but the record fair  
That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,  
Still outlives many a storm that has effac'd  
A thousand other themes less deeply trac'd.  
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid ;  
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home, 60  
The biscuit, or confectionary plum ;  
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd  
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd ;  
All this, and more endearing still than all,  
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,  
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and brakes  
That humour interpos'd too often makes ;  
All this still legible in mem'ry's page,  
And still to be so, to my latest age,  
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay 70  
Such honours to thee as my numbers may  
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,

Not scorn'd in heav'n, though little notic'd here.

Could time, his flight revers'd, restore the hours,  
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flow'rs,  
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,  
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,  
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,  
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile)  
Could those few pleasant hours again appear, 80  
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?  
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight  
Seems so to be desir'd, perhaps I might.—  
But no—what here we call our life is such,  
So little to be lov'd, and thou so much,  
That I should ill requite thee to constrain  
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast  
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)  
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle, 90  
Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile,  
There sits quiescent on the floods that show  
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,  
While airs impregnated with incense play  
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay ;  
So thou, with sails how swift ! hast reach'd the shore  
' Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,'  
And thy lov'd consort on the dang'rous tide  
Of life, long since, has anchor'd at thy side.  
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest, 100  
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—  
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest toss'd,  
Sails ript, seams op'ning wide, and compass lost,  
And day by day some current's thwarting force  
Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.  
But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he !

That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.  
My boast is not that I deduce my birth  
From loins enthron'd, and rulers of the earth ;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise— 110  
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.  
And now, farewell—time, unrevok'd, has run  
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.  
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,  
I seem t' have liv'd my childhood o'er again ;  
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,  
Without the sin of violating thine :  
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,  
And I can view this mimic show of thee,  
Time has but half succeeded in his theft— 120  
Thyself remov'd, thy power to soothe me left.

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796) was the son of a poor Scotch farmer, and worked as a labourer on his father's land. He early showed a taste for literature, though he had little opportunity for gratifying it. In 1784 he and his brother took a farm together near Mauchline, and Burns became known to the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and received help and encouragement from them. In 1786 appeared his first volume of *Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. A few scattered poems, for the most part satires, had already been circulated in manuscript, and these were included. From time to time additions were made, the last edition in Burns's lifetime appearing in 1794. In 1788 he received an appointment as excise officer, and in the same year he married Jean Armour, and settled down as a farmer at Ellisland, near Dumfries. He continued to write lyrics of all kinds; 'Scots wha hae,' 'Auld Lang Syne,' and 'My Luve's like a Red, Red Rose' were composed by 1794. 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,' one of the longest of his poems, appeared in 1795.

## THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

NOVEMBER chill blows loud wi' angry sough ;  
 The short'ning winter-day is near a close ;  
 The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh ;  
 The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose :  
 The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,  
 This night his weekly moil is at an end,  
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,  
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,  
 And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view, 10  
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;  
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stacher through  
 To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin' <sup>1</sup> noise an' glee.  
 His wee bit ingle <sup>2</sup>, blinkin bonnilie,  
 His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,  
 The lisping infant prattling on his knee,  
 Does a' his weary kiaugh <sup>3</sup> and care beguile,  
 An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,  
 At service out, amang the farmers roun' ; 20  
 Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin <sup>4</sup>  
 A cannie errand to a neibor town :  
 Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,  
 In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,  
 Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,  
 Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,  
 To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd brothers and sisters meet,  
 An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers <sup>5</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> Fluttering.<sup>2</sup> Hearth.<sup>3</sup> Anxiety.<sup>4</sup> Heedful run.<sup>5</sup> Inquires.



The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnoticed fleet ; 30  
 Each tells the uncous<sup>1</sup> that he sees or hears ;  
 The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years ;  
 Anticipation forward points the view.  
 The mother, wi' her needle an' her sheers,  
 Gars<sup>2</sup> auld claes look amaisht as weel 's the new ;  
 The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's an' their mistress's command,  
 The younkers a' are warnèd to obey ;  
 An' mind their labours wi' an eydent<sup>3</sup> hand,  
 An' ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk<sup>4</sup> or play : 40  
 'And O ! be sure to fear the Lord alway,  
 An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night !  
 Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,  
 Implore His counsel and assisting might :  
 They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright !'

But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door ;  
 Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,  
 Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,  
 To do some errands, and convoy her hame.  
 The wily mother sees the conscious flame 50  
 Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek ;  
 Wi' heart-struck anxious care, inquires his name,  
 While Jenny hafflins<sup>5</sup> is afraid to speak ;  
 Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben ;  
 A strappin' youth ; he takes the mother's eye ;  
 Blythe Jenny sees the visit 's no ill ta'en ;  
 The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.  
 The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,

<sup>1</sup> Unknown things ; cf. 'Uncouth way,' *Paradise Lost*, Bk. II.

<sup>2</sup> Makes.

<sup>3</sup> Diligent.

<sup>4</sup> Trifle.

<sup>5</sup> Partly.

But blate<sup>1</sup> and laithfu'<sup>2</sup>, scarce can weel behave ; 60  
 The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy  
 What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave ;  
 Weel-pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave<sup>3</sup>.

O happy love ! where love like this is found ;  
 O heart-felt raptures ! bliss beyond compare !  
 I've paced much this weary mortal round,  
 And sage experience bids me this declare—  
 ' If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,  
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,  
 'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair 70  
 In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,  
 Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.'

But now the supper crowns their simple board,  
 The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food :  
 The sowpe their only hawkie<sup>4</sup> does afford,  
 That 'yont the hallan<sup>5</sup> snugly chows her cood ;  
 The dame brings forth in complimental mood,  
 To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck<sup>6</sup>, fell :  
 And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it good ;  
 The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell 80  
 How 'twas a towmond<sup>7</sup> auld sin' lint was i' the bell<sup>8</sup>.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face  
 They round the ingle form a circle wide ;  
 The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,  
 The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride :  
 His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,

<sup>1</sup> Shamefaced.<sup>2</sup> Bashful.<sup>3</sup> The rest.<sup>4</sup> A white-faced cow.<sup>5</sup> A partition wall in a cottage.<sup>6</sup> Well-spared cheese.<sup>7</sup> Twelvemonth.<sup>8</sup> Since flax was in flower.

His lyart haffets <sup>1</sup> wearing thin an' bare ;  
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide—  
 He wales <sup>2</sup> a portion with judicious care,  
 And ' Let us worship God ! ' he says with solemn air. 90

They chant their artless notes in simple guise ;  
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim :  
 Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,  
 Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name ;  
 Or noble Elgin beats <sup>3</sup> the heav'nward flame,  
 The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :  
 Compared with these, Italian trills are tame ;  
 The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise ;  
 Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page, 100  
 How Abram was the friend of God on high ;  
 Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage  
 With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;  
 Or how the royal bard did groaning lie  
 Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;  
 Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry ;  
 Or rapt Isaiah's wild seraphic fire ;  
 Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,  
 How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ; 110  
 How He who bore in Heaven the second name  
 Had not on earth whereon to lay His head ;  
 How His first followers and servants sped ;  
 The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :  
 How he, was lone in Patmos banished,  
 Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,  
 And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's  
 command.

<sup>1</sup> Grey locks.<sup>2</sup> Chooses.<sup>3</sup> Adds fuel to.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King  
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays :  
 Hope 'springs exulting on triumphant wing' 120  
 That thus they all shall meet in future days :  
 There ever bask in uncreated rays,  
 No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,  
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,  
 In such society, yet still more dear ;  
 While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Then homeward all take off their several way ;  
 The youngling cottagers retire to rest :  
 The parent-pair their secret homage pay,  
 And proffer up to Heav'n the warm request, 130  
 That He who stills the raven's clamorous nest,  
 And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,  
 Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,  
 For them and for their little ones provide ;  
 But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

### TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL  
 1786

WEE modest crimson-tippèd flow'r,  
 Thou's met me in an evil hour ;  
 For I maun crush amang the stoure<sup>1</sup>  
 Thy slender stem :  
 To spare thee now is past my pow'r,  
 Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,  
 The bonnie lark, companion meet,

<sup>1</sup> Dust.



Unskilful he to note the card  
Of prudent lore,  
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,  
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,  
By human pride or cunning driv'n  
To mis'ry's brink,  
Till wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,  
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,  
 That fate is thine—no distant date;  
 Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate  
                     Full on thy bloom,  
 Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight  
                     Shall be thy doom!

OF A' THE AIRTS

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,  
I dearly like the west,  
For there the bonnie lassie lives,  
The lassie I lo'e best :  
There wild woods grow and rivers row<sup>1</sup>,  
And monie a hill between ;  
But day and night my fancy's flight  
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,  
 I see her sweet and fair :  
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,  
 I hear her charm the air :

<sup>1</sup> Roll.

There's not a bonnie flower that springs  
 By fountain, shaw<sup>1</sup>, or green ;  
 There's not a bonnie bird that sings,  
 But minds me o' my Jean.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827) was at first intended for an artist, and was apprenticed to an engraver. From his earliest childhood he saw visions, and brought home stories of angels and prophets whom he had seen on his walks. He exhibited in the Royal Academy, and for some years maintained himself by illustrating books. Among the most famous of his illustrations are those to Hayley's *Life of Cowper*, the Book of Job, Dante, and Chaucer. He devised a method of engraving his own poems on copper and printing them in colour, and only one of them was printed in the ordinary way during his life, all the rest being elaborately engraved backwards by hand. His chief poems are *Poetical Sketches*, 1783; *Songs of Innocence*, 1789; *Book of Thel*, 1789; *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, 1790; *Songs of Experience*, 1794; and a number of *Prophetic Books*, which, though very obscure, are often extraordinarily beautiful. All these were engraved in colour, and have exquisite illustrations interwoven with the text.

### NIGHT

THE sun descending in the west,  
 The evening star does shine ;  
 The birds are silent in their nest,  
 And I must seek for mine.  
 The moon, like a flower,  
 In heaven's high bower,  
 With silent delight  
 Sits and smiles on the night.  
 Farewell, green fields and happy groves,  
 Where flocks have took delight.  
 Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves  
 The feet of angels bright ;

10

<sup>1</sup> Wooded dell.

Unseen they pour blessing,  
And joy without ceasing,  
On each bud and blossom,  
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,

Where birds are cover'd warm ;

They visit caves of every beast,

To keep them all from harm.

20

If they see any weeping

That should have been sleeping,

They pour sleep on their head,

And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,

They pitying stand and weep ;

Seeking to drive their thirst away,

And keep them from the sheep.

But if they rush dreadful,

The angels, most heedful,

30

Receive each mild spirit,

New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes

Shall flow with tears of gold,

And pitying the tender cries,

And walking round the fold,

Saying ' Wrath, by his meekness,

And, by his health, sickness

Is driven away

From our immortal day.

40

' And now beside thee, bleating lamb,

I can lie down and sleep ;

Or think on Him who bore thy name,

Graze after thee and weep.



For, wash'd in life's river,  
My bright mane for ever  
Shall shine like the gold  
As I guard o'er the fold.'

## THE LAMB

LITTLE Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?

10

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:  
He is called by thy name,  
For He calls Himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, and He is mild;  
He became a little child.  
I a child, and thou a lamb,  
We are called by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

20

## CHAPTER X

### WORDSWORTH AND COLERIDGE

THE three men whom we have called the fore-runners were conspicuous for their freedom from conventionality of idea ; they did not always escape conventionality of poetic diction. Cowper, at one moment delightfully spontaneous, becomes at another a little stiff and formal in phrase ; Burns's Scottish poems are perfect, his English poems are sometimes like a countryman in city garb, chafing at the restraints of broadcloth ; even Blake can begin a lyric.

How sweet I roamed from field to field,  
on a note as natural as a robin's, and tell us a few  
lines later that

Phoebus fired my vocal rage,  
which is almost like the professorial style of Warton. The old tradition had not yet been entirely sloughed off ; it is still faintly apparent in Wordsworth's youthful verses ; then in 1797 came the immortal friendship with Coleridge, which, next year, bore fruit in the *Lyrical Ballads*. 'The principal object which I proposed to myself in these poems,' so runs the preface, 'was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men.' The theory of poetic diction was to be abandoned, and poetry was to express the essential truth of man and nature in the simplest utterance of human speech.

Of all our poets Wordsworth was the best fitted to carry out this conception. To him the entire uni-

verse was saturated with Divine presence: nothing real was insignificant, because everything real was a manifestation of God. Plato tells us of a philosopher who, with his gaze on all time and all existence, comes into the market-place and can make nothing of its fussy estimates and its petty standards. The tyrant who rules a country and the shepherd who rules a flock, how do they differ in the sight of the eternal stars? What are ten thousand acres to a man who is accustomed to regard the whole earth, or fifty generations of ancestry to one who has eternity in contemplation? Change the perspective, substitute sympathy for disdain, hold not that our great is infinitely little, but that our little is infinitely great, and you have the standpoint of Wordsworth's philosophy. The girl at the street-corner recalling a memory of her country home is as momentous as the most tragic exile that ever went into banishment. The old schoolmaster, hale under his seventy-two years, is as worthy of regard as the statesman directing his government or the soldier at the head of his victorious army. Indeed, if Wordsworth has a preference, it is for themes of 'low and rustic life, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity', and because 'such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived'.

It is in this spirit that we must read him if we would understand his message aright. Most people when they begin to study him are like children when they begin to collect wild flowers: the young taste is fastidious, it chooses and rejects, the spurge is d'11, the celandine is common, only the rarer blossoms are worth the gathering. Later on a trained eye sees more clearly the beauty of ordinary things; the range enlarges, the neglected wayside

becomes a storehouse of interest and delight. So from the outset every one with a tinge of poetry will love the *Ode* and some of the sonnets and the great passages in the *Prelude*; many will at first turn aside in wonder or impatience from *Peter Bell* and the *Cumberland Beggar* and the other common folk of the dales. But all these are elements of the same scheme; all bear their part in the same revelation, and wherever we fail to sympathize with Wordsworth's purpose it is because, as Karshish says about Lazarus, 'we see not with his opened eyes.' No poet has ever interposed less between us and the object that he wishes us to see.

The imagination of Wordsworth broods with a deep spiritual earnestness; that of Coleridge shines with a golden glory. The one transforms nothing, but views the world as God made it, and penetrates by sheer force of genius to its inner meaning. The other passes all life and all experience through an alembic of gorgeous fancy; he shows us the world in a magic mirror, not falsified but heightened, not changed in perspective but enriched in colour and romance. That 'addition of strangeness to beauty' which, Pater tells us, is distinctive of romantic art is the keynote of *The Ancient Mariner*, of *Christabel*, of *Kubla Khan*; they are full of a kind of disembodied passion, the quintessence of sense and feeling purged of all grosser environment. If Wordsworth has more of the prophet, Coleridge has more of the artist; a keener ear for actual loveliness of sound, a rhythm which though not more subtle is more varied and abundant. His *Wallenstein* is probably the only translation in the world which may fairly be said to surpass its original; there are passages in it which for sheer mastery of style can hardly be equalled in our literature. His prose writings effected a revolution in literary criticism. The men of the eighteenth century had started

from an ideal and had estimated by reference to this the book of which they were treating. Coleridge starts from the book itself, and discusses not its relation to a standard, but its actual meaning and purport. The papers on Wordsworth in the *Biographia Literaria* are models of their kind; and the same luminous wisdom that inspired them appears, along a wider range of topics, in the *Friend* and in the published lectures and sermons.

Southey, the third member of the 'Lake School', is not here represented. He was an excellent handicraftsman of letters who tried every form, and in all exhibited the same ability and the same level of achievement. His lives of *Nelson* and of *Wesley* have attained to the decent eminence of standard works; his poetry is like Bayard's horse, which 'had every virtue and only one defect, namely, that it was dead'. In *Thalaba*, in *Joan of Arc*, in *Madoc* there are passages of a cold beauty which deserves its meed of admiration; but they have no passion, no vitality, and they exercised no real influence on the course of our literature. It is a mere accident of friendship and circumstance that has linked his name with those of two poets who, in all essential qualities, were immeasurably his superiors.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850) was brought up among the Cumberland dalesmen. He has left a complete record of his early life and development in *The Prelude* (published after his death). He was a warm supporter of the French Revolution in its earlier stages, but after the rise of Napoleon he became suspicious of political change, and turned to Conservatism. His most intimate friend was Coleridge, and in 1798 the two poets published together their *Lyrical Ballads*, which inaugurated a new style of poetry. In 1799 Wordsworth settled in the Lake country; Coleridge followed in 1800; and these two and Southey formed what was known as 'the Lake School'. The rest of his life was singularly uneventful, the only incident

of real importance being his appointment as Poet Laureate in 1845.

Among his chief works are: *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798; *Poems, in two volumes*, 1807; *The Excursion*, 1814; *The White Doe of Rylstone*, 1815; *Peter Bell*, 1819; *The River Duddon: a Series of Sonnets*, 1820; *Yarrow Revisited, and other Poems*, 1835. He also wrote a number of prefaces containing his theories of poetry and poetic diction, and several political pamphlets.

### LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY,

ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR.  
 JULY 13, 1798

FIVE years have past ; five summers, with the length  
 Of five long winters ! and again I hear  
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs  
 With a soft inland murmur.—Once again  
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
 That on a wild secluded scene impress  
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect  
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
 The day is come when I again repose  
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10  
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,  
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,  
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves  
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines  
 Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,  
 Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke  
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !  
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20  
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,  
To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,  
In which the affections gently lead us on,—  
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul :  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

30

40

If this  
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft—  
In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—

50

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye ! thou wanderer thro' the woods,  
How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,  
With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60  
The picture of the mind revives again :  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts  
That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first  
I came among these hills ; when like a roe  
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led : more like a man 70  
Flying from something that he dreads than one  
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then  
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone by)  
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite ; a feeling and a love, 80  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,  
And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts  
Have followed ; for such loss, I would believe,



Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
 To look on nature, not as in the hour  
 Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes 90  
 The still, sad music of humanity,  
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :  
 A motion and a spirit, that impels 100  
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still  
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
 And mountains ; and of all that we behold  
 From this green earth ; of all the mighty world  
 Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,  
 And what perceive ; well pleased to recognize  
 In nature and the language of the sense  
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul 110  
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,  
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more  
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay :  
 For thou art with me here upon the banks  
 Of this fair river ; thou my dearest Friend,  
 My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch  
 The language of my former heart, and read  
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while  
 May I behold in thee what I was once, 120

My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,  
Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy : for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgements, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all 130  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;  
And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee : and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind 140  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,  
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts  
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance—  
If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams  
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful stream 150  
We stood together ; and that I, so long  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came  
Unwearied in that service : rather say  
With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,  
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me  
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

### THE TABLES TURNED (1798)

Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books ;  
Or surely you'll grow double :  
Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your looks ;  
Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :  
Come, hear the woodland linnet,  
How sweet his music ! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

10

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !  
He, too, is no mean preacher :  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

20

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :—  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art ;  
Close up those barren leaves ;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives. 30

## LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING (1798)

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran ;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes. 10

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—  
But the least motion which they made,  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air ;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there. 20

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

\* \* \* (1798)

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

10

'She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

20

'The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear

In many a secret place  
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty born of murmuring sound  
 Shall pass into her face. 30

‘And vital feelings of delight  
 Shall rear her form to stately height,  
 Her virgin bosom swell ;  
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
 While she and I together live  
 Here in this happy dell.’

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
 How soon my Lucy’s race was run !  
 She died, and left to me  
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene 40  
 The memory of what has been,  
 And never more will be.

## SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEPHERD,  
 TO THE ESTATES AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,  
 And Emont’s murmur mingled with the Song.—  
 The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
 A festal strain that hath been silent long :—

‘From town to town, from tower to tower.  
 The red rose is a gladsome flower.  
 Her thirty years of winter past,  
 The red rose is revived at last ;  
 She lifts her head for endless spring,  
 For everlasting blossoming : 10  
 Both roses flourish, red and white<sup>1</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> i. e. The houses of Lancaster and York.

In love and sisterly delight  
The two that were at strife are blended,  
And all old troubles now are ended.—  
Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her  
Who is the flower of Lancaster !  
Behold her how She smiles to-day  
On this great throng, this bright array !  
Fair greeting doth she send to all  
From every corner of the hall ;  
But chiefly from above the board  
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,  
A Clifford to his own restored !

20

‘They came with banner, spear, and shield ;  
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.  
Not long the Avenger was withstood—  
Earth helped him with the cry of blood :  
St. George was for us, and the might  
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.  
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,  
We loudest in the faithful north :  
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,  
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;  
Our strong-abodes and castles see  
The glory of their loyalty.

30

‘How glad is Skipton at this hour—  
Though lonely, a deserted Tower ;  
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom :  
We have them at the feast of Brough’m.  
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep  
Of years be on her !—She shall reap  
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing  
As in a dream her own renewing.  
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad, I deem,

40

Beside her little humble stream ;  
And she that keepeth watch and ward  
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;  
They both are happy at this hour,  
Though each is but a lonely Tower :—  
But here is perfect joy and pride  
For one fair House by Emont's side,  
This day, distinguished without peer,  
To see her Master and to cheer—  
Him, and his Lady-mother dear !

50

'Oh ! it was a time forlorn  
When the fatherless was born—  
Give her wings that she may fly  
Or she sees her infant die !  
Swords that are with slaughter wild  
Hunt the Mother and the Child.  
Who will take them from the light ?  
—Yonder is a man in sight—  
Yonder is a house—but where ?  
No, they must not enter there.  
To the caves, and to the brooks,  
To the clouds of heaven she looks ;  
She is speechless, but her eyes  
Pray in ghostly agonies.  
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
Maid and Mother undefiled,  
Save a Mother and her Child !

60

70

'Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy ?  
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass  
Light as the wind along the grass.  
Can this be He who hither came  
In secret, like a smothered flame ?  
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed



For shelter, and a poor man's bread !  
God loves the Child ; and God hath willed 80  
That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
The Lady's words, when forced away  
The last she to her Babe did say :  
" My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,  
For lowly shepherd's life is best ! "

' Alas ! when evil men are strong  
No life is good, no pleasure long.  
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,  
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, 90  
And quit the flowers that summer brings  
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs ;  
Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
—Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !  
Hear it, good man, old in days !  
Thou tree of covert and of rest  
For this young Bird that is distrest ;  
Among thy branches safe he lay,  
And he was free to sport and play, 100  
When falcons were abroad for prey.

' A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
And heaviness in Clifford's ear !  
I said, when evil men are strong,  
No life is good, no pleasure long,  
A weak and cowardly untruth !  
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
And thankful through a weary time,  
That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
—Again he wanders forth at will, 110  
And tends a flock from hill to hill :

His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen  
Such garb with such a noble mien ;  
Among the shepherd-grooms no mate  
Hath he, a Child of strength and State !  
Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,  
Nor yet for higher sympathy.  
To his side the fallow-deer  
Came, and rested without fear ;  
The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120  
Stooped down to pay him fealty ;  
And both the undying fish that swim  
Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him ;  
The pair were servants of his eye  
In their immortality ;  
And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,  
Moved to and fro, for his delight.  
He knew the rocks which Angels haunt  
Upon the mountains visitant ;  
He hath kenned them taking wing : 130  
And into caves where Faeries sing  
He hath entered ; and been told  
By Voices how men lived of old.  
Among the heavens his eye can see  
The face of thing that is to be ;  
And, if that men report him right,  
His tongue could whisper words of might.  
—Now another day is come,  
Fitter hope, and nobler doom ;  
He hath thrown aside his crook, 140  
And hath buried deep his book ;  
Armour rusting in his halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls ;—  
“Quell the Scot,” exclaims the Lance—  
Bear me to the heart of France,

Is the longing of the Shield—  
Tell thy name, thou trembling Field  
Field of death, where'er thou be,  
Groan thou with our victory !  
Happy day, and mighty hour, 150  
When our Shepherd in his power,  
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
To his ancestors restored  
Like a re-appearing Star,  
Like a glory from afar,  
First shall head the flock of war !'

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not know  
How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart was  
framed :

How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,  
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :  
Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place  
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-hearth ;  
The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and more ; 170  
And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
'The good Lord Clifford' was the name he bore.

## SONNET XXX (1807)

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :  
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,  
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought, 10  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;  
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

## SONNET XXXIII (1807)

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :  
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ; 10  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus<sup>1</sup> rising from the sea ;  
Or hear old Triton<sup>2</sup> blow his wreathèd horn.

<sup>1</sup> See Virgil, *Georg.*, IV. 422-436.    <sup>2</sup> See Ovid, *Met.*, I. 833-846.

## ODE ON THE INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY (1807)

## I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
    To me did seem  
    Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—  
    Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
    By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

## II

    The Rainbow comes and goes, 10  
    And lovely is the Rose,  
    The Moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
    Waters on a starry night  
    Are beautiful and fair ;  
    The sunshine is a glorious birth ;  
    But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

## III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
    And while the young lambs bound 20  
    As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief :  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
    And I again am strong :  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;

I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,  
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
And all the earth is gay ;  
Land and sea  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—  
Thou Child of Joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
Shepherd-boy !

## IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call  
Ye to each other make ; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;  
My heart is at your festival,  
My head hath its coronal,  
The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
While Earth herself is adorning,  
This sweet May-morning,  
And the Children are culling  
On every side,  
In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,  
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—  
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
A single Field which I have looked upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is gone :  
The Pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat :  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

## V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar :  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home :  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy ;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended ;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

60

70

## VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,  
And no unworthy aim,  
The homely Nurse doth all she can  
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

80

## VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes!  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, 90  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;  
    A wedding or a festival,  
    A mourning or a funeral;  
    And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song:  
    Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
    But it will not be long  
    Ere this be thrown aside, 100  
    And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage;  
    As if his whole vocation  
    Were endless imitation.

## VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance both belie  
    Thy Soul's immensity;  
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep 110  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind.—  
    Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!  
    On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality



Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
 A Presence which is not to be put by ; 120  
 [To whom the grave  
 Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight  
 Of day or the warm light,  
 A place of thought where we in waiting lie ;]  
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,  
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?  
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight, 130  
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers  
 Is something that doth live,  
 That nature yet remembers  
 What was so fugitive !  
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
 Perpetual benediction : not indeed  
 For that which is most worthy to be blest ;  
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed 140  
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—  
 Not for these I raise  
 The song of thanks and praise ;  
 But for those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,  
 Falling from us, vanishings ;  
 Blank misgivings of a Creature  
 Moving about in worlds not realised,  
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature 150

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,  
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing ;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
To perish never : 160  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the shore, 170  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !  
And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound !  
We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-day  
Feel the gladness of the May !  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight, 180  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find  
 Strength in what remains behind ;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be ;  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering ;  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

190

## XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !  
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;  
 I only have relinquished one delight  
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
     Is lovely yet ;  
 The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

200

## THE EXCURSION. BOOK IV (1814)

I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul

Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon  
Brightened with joy ; for from within were heard  
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
Mysterious union with its native sea. 1140

Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith ; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;  
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;  
And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
Adore, and worship, when you know it not ;  
Pious beyond the intention of your thought ;  
Devout above the meaning of your will. 1150

—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.  
The estate of man would be indeed forlorn  
If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
Made the eye blind, and closed the passages  
Through which the ear converses with the heart.  
Has not the soul, the being of your life,  
Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks  
At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky,  
To rest upon their circumambient walls ; 1160

A temple framing of dimensions vast,  
And yet not too enormous for the sound  
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst  
Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
To glorify the Eternal ! What if these  
Did never break the stillness that prevails  
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,  
And the soft woodlark here did never chant  
Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide  
Impulse and utterance. The whispering air 1170

Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,  
And blind recesses of the caverned rocks ;  
The little rills, and waters numberless,  
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes  
With the loud streams : and often, at the hour  
When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard  
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
One voice—the solitary raven, flying  
Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,  
Unseen, perchance above all power of sight— 1180  
An iron knell ! with echoes from afar  
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which  
The wanderer accompanies her flight  
Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,  
Diminishing by distance till it seemed  
To expire ; yet from the abyss is caught again,  
And yet again recovered !

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834) was a school-fellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital. His genius was extraordinarily versatile, and he became famous as preacher, lecturer, journalist, and poet. His earlier work was much influenced by Bowles, who revived the sonnet, and helped to awaken the spirit of romanticism in English poetry. Coleridge's indolence and irresolution prevented him from finishing a large number of the works that he planned. He was perpetually devising vast projects, and leaving them half-done. His first volume of poems, including three sonnets by Charles Lamb, appeared in 1795. In 1796 he founded *The Watchman*, which succeeded in offending every subscriber in the course of ten numbers. In 1797 he met Wordsworth, and they planned the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), to which Coleridge contributed *The Ancient Mariner*, *The Nightingale*, and two scenes from his tragedy of *Osorio*, which was afterwards published under the title of *Remorse*. In the same year (1797) he wrote the first part of *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*. During this time he was preaching in various Unitarian chapels.

In 1798 the Wedgwoods offered him an annuity of £150 on condition that he devoted himself entirely to philosophy and poetry. He went to Germany to study the philosophy of Kant, which had great influence on him. In 1800 he settled at Keswick, where he wrote the second part of *Christabel* and the *Ode to Dejection* (1802). His health became very bad, and for the rest of his life he was more or less of an invalid. Finally, in 1816, he went to live under the care of Dr. Gillman at Highgate, with whom he remained till his death. *Sibylline Leaves* were published in 1817, and the first collection of Coleridge's *Poetical and Dramatic Works* in 1828. Besides these he produced a large quantity of prose works. Among the most important are: *The Friend, a Literary, Moral, and Political Journal*, 1809-10; *Biographia Literaria*, 1817; *Aids to Reflection*, 1825. His lectures on Shakespeare and other poets were delivered in 1810-11, 1812, 1818, and were published posthumously from notes taken by J. P. Collier.

## THE ANCIENT MARINER

'An ancient Mariner greeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding feast, and detaineth one.' The Mariner tells how he sailed to 'the land of ice and fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen, till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog and was received with great joy and hospitality'. Then, on an evil day, he shot the bird in sheer wantonness. Soon the fog cleared, and

Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.

'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

And thus by justifying the deed they share in its guilt. The ship sails on to a tropic sea and is then becalmed. The crew suffer agonies of thirst, and 'in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck'. One by one his shipmates drop dead on the deck, until at last he lives on alone.

## PART THE FOURTH

In his  
loneliness  
and fixed-  
ness he  
yearneth  
towards the  
journeying

moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward ; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

THE moving Moon went up the sky,  
And nowhere did abide :  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemooked the sultry main,  
Like April hoar-frost spread ;  
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
The charmed water burnt away  
A still and awful red.

By the light  
of the moon  
he behold-  
eth God's  
creatures  
of the great  
calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes :  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire :  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam ; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their  
beauty  
and their  
happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare :  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,

He bleaseth  
them in his  
heart.

And I blessed them unaware :  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray ;  
 And from my neck so free  
 The Albatross fell off, and sank  
 Like lead into the sea.

The spell  
 begins to  
 break.

## PART THE FIFTH

Oh sleep ! it is a gentle thing,  
 Beloved from pole to pole !  
 To Mary Queen the praise be given !  
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,  
 That had so long remained,  
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;  
 And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of  
 the holy  
 Mother, the  
 ancient  
 mariner is  
 refreshed  
 with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
 My garments all were dank ;  
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :  
 I was so light—almost  
 I thought that I had died in sleep,  
 And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :  
 It did not come anear ;  
 But with its sound it shook the sails,  
 That were so thin and sere.

He heareth  
 sounds  
 and seeth  
 strange  
 sights and  
 commo-  
 tions in the  
 sky and the  
 element.

The upper air burst into life !  
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
 To and fro they were hurried about !  
 And to and fro, and in and out,  
 The wan stars danced between.



And the coming wind did roar more loud  
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;  
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud ;  
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
 The Moon was at its side :  
 Like waters shot from some high crag.  
 The lightning fell with never a jag,  
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies  
 of the ship's  
 crew are  
 inspired,  
 and the  
 ship moves  
 on ;

The loud wind never reached the ship,  
 Yet now the ship moved on !  
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
 The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;  
 It had been strange, even in a dream,  
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ;  
 Yet never a breeze up blew ;  
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
 Where they were wont to do ;  
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—  
 We were a ghastly crew.

but not by  
 the souls of  
 the men,  
 nor by  
 daemons of  
 earth or  
 middle air,  
 but by a  
 blessed  
 troop of  
 angelic  
 spirits, sent  
 down by the  
 invocation  
 of the guar-  
 dian saint.

The body of my brother's son  
 Stood by me, knee to knee :  
 The body and I pulled at one rope,  
 But he said nought to me.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner !'  
 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !  
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
 Which to their corpses came again,  
 But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropt their arms,  
And clustered round the mast ;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun ;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the skylark sing ;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute ;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe :  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid : and it was he  
That made the ship to go.

The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The  
lonesome  
spirit from  
the south-  
pole carries  
on the ship  
as far as the  
line, in obe-  
dience to  
the angelic  
troop, but  
still re-  
quireth  
vengeance

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
 Had fixed her to the ocean :  
 But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
 With a short uneasy motion—  
 Backwards and forwards half her length  
 With a short uneasy motion.

Then, like a pawing horse let go,  
 She made a sudden bound :  
 It flung the blood into my head,  
 And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar  
 Spirit's  
 fellow  
 daemons,  
 the invisi-  
 ble inhabi-  
 tants of the  
 element,  
 take part in  
 his wrong ;  
 and two of  
 them re-  
 late, one to  
 the other,  
 that  
 penance  
 long and  
 heavy for  
 the ancient  
 mariner  
 hath been  
 accorded to  
 the Polar  
 Spirit, who  
 returneth  
 southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,

I have not to declare ;

But ere my living life returned,

I heard and in my soul discerned

Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man ?

By him who died on cross,

With his cruel bow he laid full low

The harmless Albatross.

'The spirit who bideth by himself

In the land of mist and snow,

He loved the bird that loved the man

Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,

As soft as honeydew :

Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,

And penance more will do.'

#### PART THE SIXTH

The curse  
 is finally  
 expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more

I viewed the ocean green,

And looked far forth, yet little saw

Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks on,  
And turns no more his head ;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made :  
Its path was not upon the sea.  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sailed softly too :  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed  
The lighthouse top I see ?  
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?  
Is this mine own countree ?

And the  
ancient  
mariner  
beholdeth  
his native  
country.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
O let me be awake, my God !  
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn !  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock :  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,  
Till rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
In crimson colours came.

The angelic  
spirits  
leave the  
dead  
bodies, and  
appear in  
their own  
forms of  
light.

A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were :  
I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood !  
A man all light, a seraph-man,  
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :  
It was a heavenly sight !  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light ;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
No voice did they impart—  
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
I heard them coming fast :  
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy  
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :  
It is the Hermit good !  
He singeth loud his godly hymns  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away  
The Albatross's blood.

## CHRISTABEL (1797)

## PART I

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;  
Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !  
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch :  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
She makes answer to the clock,  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;      10  
Ever and ay, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?  
The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin grey cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full ;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is grey :      20  
'Tis a month before the month of May  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the wood so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate ?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight ;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that 's far away.

30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak,  
But moss and rarest mistletoe :  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel !  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell.—  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

40

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek—  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.  
Hush, beating heart of Christabel !  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !

50

She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.

What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,  
Drest in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone :  
The neck that made that white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she—  
Beautiful exceedingly !

60

' Mary mother, save me now !'

(Said Christabel) ' And who art thou ?'

70

The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet :—  
' Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness :  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear !'  
Said Christabel, ' How camest thou here ?'  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet :—

' My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine :  
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :  
They choked my cries with force and fright,  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind.

80



They spurred amain, their steeds were white;  
And once we crossed the shade of night.  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be ; 90  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced I wis)  
Since one, the tallest of the five,  
Took me from the palfrey's back,  
A weary woman, scarce alive.  
Some muttered words his comrades spoke :  
He placed me underneath this oak,  
He swore they would return with haste ;  
Whither they went I cannot tell—  
I thought I heard, some minutes past, 100  
Sounds as of a castle bell.  
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
And help a wretched maid to flee.'

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand  
And comforted fair Geraldine  
'O well, bright dame ! may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline ;  
And gladly our stout chivalry  
Will he send forth and friends withal  
To guide and guard you safe and free 110  
Home to your noble father's hall.'

She rose : and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
Her gracious stars the lady blest,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :  
All our household are at rest,  
The hall as silent as the cell ;  
Sir Leoline is weak in health  
And may not well awakened be,

But we will move as if in stealth,  
And I beseech your courtesy,  
This night, to share your couch with me. 120

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
Took the key that fitted well ;  
A little door she opened straight,  
All in the middle of the gate ;  
The gate that was ironed within and without,  
Where an army in battle array had marched out.  
The lady sank, belike through pain,<sup>1</sup>  
And Christabel with might and main 130  
Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
Over the threshold of the gate :  
Then the lady rose again,  
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court : right glad they were.  
And Christabel devoutly cried  
To the lady by her side,  
' Praise we the Virgin all divine  
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress ! 140  
' Alas, Alas ! ' said Geraldine,  
' I cannot speak for weariness.  
So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
The mastiff old did not awake,  
Yet she an angry moan did make !  
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

<sup>1</sup> According to the old tradition a witch cannot cross the threshold of a house, but must be carried in.

Never till now she uttered yell  
Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :  
For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

150

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
Pass as lightly as you will !  
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,  
Amid their own white ashes lying ;  
But when the lady passed, there came  
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;  
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
And nothing else saw she thereby,  
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,  
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.  
' O softly tread,' said Christabel,  
' My father seldom sleepeth well.'

160

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
And jealous of the listening air  
They steal their way from stair to stair,  
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
And now they pass the Baron's room,  
As still as death with stifled breath !  
And now have reached her chamber door ;  
And now doth Geraldine press down  
The rushes of the chamber floor.

170

The moon shines dim in the open air,  
And not a moonbeam enters here.  
But they without its light can see  
The chamber carved so curiously,  
Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
All made out of the carver's brain,  
For a lady's chamber meet :

180

The lamp with twofold silver chain  
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
Sank down upon the floor below.

'O weary lady, Geraldine, 190  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !  
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;  
My mother made it of wild flowers.'

'And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?'  
Christabel answered—'Woe is me !  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell,  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell 200  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !'  
'I would,' said Geraldine, 'she were !'

But soon with altered voice, said she—  
'Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine !  
I have power to bid thee flee.'  
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?  
And why with hollow voice cries she, 210  
'Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine—  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off ! 'tis given to me.'

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—  
'Alas!' said she, 'this ghastly ride—  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!'  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, 'Tis over now!'

Again the wild-flower wine she drank :  
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright ;  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.

220

And thus the lofty lady spake—  
'All they, who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel!  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befell,  
Even I in my degree will try,  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself ; for I  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.'  
Quoth Christabel, 'So let it be!'  
And as the lady bade, did she.  
Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
And lay down in her loveliness.

230

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,  
That vain it were her lids to close ;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

240

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around ;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast :  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold ! her bosom and half her side ——  
A sight to dream of, not to tell !  
O shield her ! shield sweet Christabel !

250

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ;  
Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !  
Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay,  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;  
Then suddenly as one defied  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
And lay down by the Maiden's side !—  
And in her arms the maid she took,

260

Ah wel-a-day !

And with low voice and doleful look  
These words did say :  
'In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,  
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel !  
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,  
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;

270

But vainly thou warrest,

For this is alone in

Thy power to declare,

That in the dim forest

. Thou heard'st a low moaning,

And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair :

And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,  
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.'

## THE CONCLUSION TO PART I

It was a lovely sight to see  
 The lady Christabel, when she 280  
 Was praying at the old oak tree.  
     Amid the jagged shadows  
     Of mossy leafless boughs,  
     Kneeling in the moonlight,  
     To make her gentle vows ;  
 Her slender palms together prest,  
 Heaving sometimes on her breast ;  
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale—  
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear, 290  
 Each about to have a tear.  
 With open eyes (ah woe is me !)  
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,  
 Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,  
 Dreaming that alone, which is—  
 O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,  
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?  
 And lo ! the worker of these harms,  
 That holds the maiden in her arms,  
 Seems to slumber still and mild, 300  
 As a mother with her child.  
 A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
 O Geraldine ! since arms of thine  
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
 O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—  
 Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,  
 The night-birds all that hour were still.  
 But now they are jubilant anew,  
 From cliff and tower, tu—whoo ! tu—whoo !  
 Tu—whoo ! tu—whoo ! from wood and fell ! 310

And see ! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance ;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft ; the smooth thin lids  
Close o'er her eyes ; and tears she sheds—  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright !  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light !

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess, 320  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And, if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
What if she knew her mother near ?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call : 330  
For the blue sky bends over all !

## KUBLA KHAN (1798)

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree :  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round :  
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.



But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !  
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced :  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war ! 30

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves ;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.

It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw :  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she played, 40  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,

That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !

50

Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drank the milk of Paradise.

## THE NIGHTINGALE (1798)

'Tis the merry nightingale  
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates  
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,  
As he were fearful that an April night  
Would be too short for him to utter forth  
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul  
Of all its music !

And I know a grove  
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,  
Which the great lord inhabits not ; and so  
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,  
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,  
Thin grass and kingcups grow within the paths.  
But never elsewhere in one place I knew  
So many nightingales ; and far and near,  
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,  
They answer and provoke each other's song,  
With skirmish and capricious passagings,  
And murmurs musical and sweet jug jug,  
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—  
Stirring the air with such an harmony,  
That should you close your eyes, you might almost

10

20

Forget it was not day ! On moonlight bushes,  
 Whose dewy leaflets are but half-disclosed,  
 You may perchance behold them on the twigs,  
 Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full  
 Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade  
 Lights up her love-torch.

### FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE frost performs its secret ministry,  
 Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry  
 Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.  
 The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,  
 Have left me to that solitude, which suits  
 Abstruser musings: save that at my side  
 My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.  
 'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs  
 And vexes meditation with its strange  
 And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood, 10  
 This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,  
 With all the numberless goings-on of life,  
 Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame  
 Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;  
 Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,  
 Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.  
 Methinks, its motion in this hush of Nature  
 Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,  
 Making it a companionable form,  
 Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit 20  
 By its own moods interprets, everywhere  
 Echo or mirror seeking of itself,  
 And makes a toy of thought.

But O ! how oft,  
 How oft, at school, with most believing mind,  
 Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,

To watch that fluttering *stranger* ! and as oft  
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt  
Of my sweet birthplace, and the old church-tower,  
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang  
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day, 30  
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me  
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear  
Most like articulate sounds of things to come !  
So gazed I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,  
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams !  
And so I brooded all the following morn,  
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye  
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book :  
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched  
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up, 40  
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,  
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,  
My playmate when we both were clothed alike !

Dear babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,  
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,  
Fill up the interspersed vacancies  
And momentary pauses of the thought !  
My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart  
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,  
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore 50  
And in far other scenes ! For I was reared  
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,  
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.  
But *thou*, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze  
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags  
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,  
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores  
And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear

The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
Of that eternal language, which thy God  
Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
Himself in all, and all things in himself.  
Great universal Teacher ! He shall mould  
Thy Spirit, and by giving make it ask.

60

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,  
Whether the summer clothe the general earth  
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing  
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch  
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch  
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eve-drops fall 70  
Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
Or if the secret ministry of frost  
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,  
Quietly shining to the quiet moon.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

THE title of the Romantic movement has been so widely and so loosely applied that we may well despair of bringing it under any precise definition. Goethe and Jean Paul, Hugo and Gautier, Berlioz and Schumann have all been called Romantics, and in each pair the points of contrast are as significant as the points of resemblance. But, roughly speaking, we may say that there are two qualities which the movement generally displays—the sense of revolt and the sense of adventure. ‘*Suivons les règles*’ is a maxim which at once rouses the Romantics into opposition. The laws may be political, or literary, or musical; the fact that they claim authority is a reason for challenging them. The bark sets out upon an unknown sea, with youth at the prow and pleasure at the helm: it will steer its own course; it will defy storm and whirlwind; it is confident that a craft so gallantly manned and equipped can never come to shipwreck. Veterans who call advice from the shore are timorous pedants who have never ventured beyond the harbour; their methods are outworn, their charts are obsolete; the illimitable sea is calling, and beyond the horizon lie the happy isles<sup>1</sup>.

And with this sense of adventure comes the sense of the remote or the exotic. Scott, his imagination full of border ballads, writes about moss-troopers and knights and castles in lonely islands; Byron, aflame with the spirit of Greek independence, writes

<sup>1</sup> It may be worth recalling the fact that Byron died at thirty-six, Shelley at thirty, and Keats at twenty-six.

*The Giaour* and *The Corsair* and *The Siege of Corinth*; Shelley defies orthodoxy in *The Revolt of Islam*, and paints a distant ideal in *Epipsychidion*; Keats finds his favourite topics in *Hyperion* and *Endymion* and the *Ode to a Grecian Urn*. The restrictions of everyday life are too narrow, the emotions of common folk are too trivial; poetry demands a more emphatic event and an atmosphere more highly charged.

Of our three greatest Romantic poets Byron has throughout Europe the widest reputation. For this three reasons may be given. First, that he is the direct antagonist of that Pharisaic narrowness with which we are accredited by our continental neighbours. The persecution from which he suffered accentuated his feeling of revolt, and he stands, in the eyes of France and Germany, for the liberator who helped to free England from Puritan trammels. Second, that of all English poets he loses the least by translation. He had little feeling for the *mot juste*, he had little ear for niceties of rhythm, he wrote, as he thought, at the white-heat of improvisation, and, like a better man than he, seldom blotted a line. Third, and most important, there is in his imagination a certain lavish virility which pours forth the emotions of the moment without ever counting the cost. He is absolutely fearless, he says whatever is in his mind, he gives us, in the slang phrase, a 'human document' which no scholiast has ever revised. And the same is true of his verse. It is often imperfect, it is often slipshod, but it is full of a reckless and spendthrift ease which we cannot help admiring. A stanza in *Don Juan* begins:—

Having wound up with this sublime comparison,  
Methinks we may proceed upon our narrative,  
and never doubts that the rhymes will come.

No doubt he was a *poseur*. To be so was in his temperament, it was encouraged by every circumstance in his career; and to this we may attribute

the fact that his lyrics are always the weakest of his work. But he had satire and humour and a vivid sense of the picturesque; he could tell a story from the outside, and fill its characters to the measure of his own personality. In all his writing there is not one line which touches the Infinite; there are a thousand which reveal the autobiography of one who, with all his affectations, 'pourtant était un homme.'

The central idea of Shelley's poetry is that love is the only thing in the world which is of serious account, and that love is immortal. He has an intense belief in human goodness, and an equally intense desire to emancipate it from all the laws and conventions which seem to hamper its freedom. Arnold has called him 'ineffectual', but the word is unduly harsh; it ignores the vitalizing and stimulating power which he wields by very force of earnestness. He is unpractical, he is visionary; the world which he depicts is of the substance of the rainbow; yet if he more often inspires than convinces we may remember that the function of poetry is less to convince than to inspire. As an artist he is the complement and antithesis of Byron: he has less humour, he has less virility; but his passion is far deeper and more genuine, his imagination far richer and more creative. And the whole is clothed with an exquisite melody of verse which, if a little too iridescent in colour, yet fills the ear with loveliness of tone and cadence. In *Prometheus*, in *Alastor*, in *Epipsychidion*, in *Adonais* we seem to have passed the frontier which separates poetry from music; the lines sing like a tune, the epithets glow like a chromatic harmony:—

The rocks are cloven, and through the purple m  
I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds  
That trample the dim winds: in each there stand  
A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.



Yet the greatest melody is not that which flashes with separate points of colour, but that which shines in a continuous radiance; which is saturated with its emotion, which holds its diversities of hue in such perfect organic unity that they seem not like details of an artistic composition, but like features of a living form<sup>1</sup>. And such melody is that of Keats. His verse is perhaps the most flexible in English literature: so flexible that the reviewers picked out its most admirable lines and scornfully inquired how they were intended to scan; yet, like the music of Schubert, it gives us the impression of absolute spontaneity. There are few devices, few 'colour words', and those always set at a point of emotional intensity: now and then he dwells upon a phrase with evident delight in its beauty, but we feel that the delight follows the choice, and does not determine it. On one side he is the most sensuous of our great poets; on the other side he can express his artistic creed with perfect sincerity in the words:—

Beauty is truth, truth beauty: that is all  
Ye know on Earth, and all ye need to know.

Nor is this apparent contradiction hard to reconcile. Keats had the temperament of the new Romance, but he had the spirit of the Greek. His sonnet on Chapman's Homer unlocks his heart. Nothing could be less like his verse than the great solid rough-hewn periods of the Elizabethan translator: but through these he penetrated into that world of heroic beauty where Homer sits enthroned with Sophocles at his feet. We are too apt to think of Greek poetry as cold, sculpturesque, unemotional: it was none of these. Greek poetry is pulsing with life and passion, it is exquisitely sensitive to human pleasure and human pain; yet it controls these with

<sup>1</sup> See for example the opening stanza of *The Eve of St. Agnes*.

such sheer love of beauty that they can never pass into riot or extravagance. And in this matter Keats is a true Greek. He has learned a different language, but he employs it to the same purpose: his poetry is 'the poetry of earth', but the land which it inhabits is hard by the dwellings of Olympus.

GEORGE GORDON NOEL, LORD BYRON (1788-1824), was educated at Harrow and Cambridge. Sensitive, lame, and the son of an extremely foolish mother, he early made himself conspicuous by his self-will and brilliancy. He passed from one extravagance to another, and finally offended public opinion so far that he was obliged to leave England. He settled in Italy, where he and Shelley lived in close friendship. He died at thirty-six, of a fever caught while fighting in the cause of Greek liberty.

Byron was an extremely prolific author, and prided himself on writing fast. His chief works are: (Satires) *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, 1808; *Beppo*, 1818; *Don Juan*, 1819-21; *The Liberal*, containing 'Vision of Judgement,' 'Letter to the Editor of my Grandmother's Review,' &c., 1823; (Lyrics) *Hours of Idleness*, 1807; *Hebrew Melodies*, 1815; *Poems*, 1816; (Narrative poems) *Childe Harold*, 1812-18; *The Giaour*, 1813; *The Bride of Abydos*, 1813; *The Corsair*, 1814; *Lara*, 1814; *Siege of Corinth*, 1816; *Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems*, 1816; (Dramas) *Manfred*, 1817; *The Two Foscari*, 1821; *Cain, a Mystery*, 1821; *The Deformed Transformed*, 1824.

## CHILDE HAROLD. CANTO II

### LXXIII

FAIR Greece! sad relic of departed worth!  
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!  
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,  
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?  
Not such thy sons who whilome did await,  
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,

In bleak Thermopylae's sepulchral strait—  
 Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,  
 Leap from Eurota's<sup>1</sup> banks, and call thee from the tomb?

## LXXIV

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow 10  
 Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus<sup>2</sup> and his train,  
 Couldst thou forbode the dismal hour which now  
 Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?  
 Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,  
 But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;  
 Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,  
 Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;  
 From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed,  
 unmann'd.

## LXXV

In all save form alone, how changed! and who 20  
 That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,  
 Who would but deem their bosoms burn'd anew  
 With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!  
 And many dream withal the hour is nigh  
 That gives them back their fathers' heritage:  
 For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,  
 Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,  
 Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

## LXXVI

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not  
 Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?  
 By their right arms the conquest must be wrought? 30  
 Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!

<sup>1</sup> The chief river of Laconia.

<sup>2</sup> Leader of the revolt against the Thirty Tyrants, 403 B.C. His head quarters were at Phyle.

True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,  
 But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.  
 Shades of the Helots<sup>1</sup> ! triumph o'er your foe !  
 Greece ! change thy lords, thy state is still the same ;  
 Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

## MANFRED

Act III, Scene iv.

*Interior of the Tower.**MANFRED alone.*

THE stars are forth, the moon above the tops  
 Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful !  
 I linger yet with Nature, for the Night  
 Hath been to me a more familiar face  
 Than that of man ; and in her starry shade  
 Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
 I learn'd the language of another world.  
 I do remember me, that in my youth,  
 When I was wandering,—upon such a night  
 I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
 'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome ;  
 The trees which grew along the broken arches  
 Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars  
 Shone through the rents of ruin ; from afar  
 The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber ; and  
 More near from out the Caesars' palace came  
 The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
 Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
 Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
 Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach  
 Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood

10

20

<sup>1</sup> The serfs of Laconia.

Within a bowshot. Where the Caesars dwelt,  
 And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst  
 A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,  
 And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,  
 Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth ;  
 But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,  
 A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,  
 While Caesar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,  
 Grovel on earth in indistinct decay. 30  
 And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon  
 All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
 Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
 Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
 As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries ;  
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
 And making that which was not, till the place  
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
 With silent worship of the great of old,—  
 The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule 40  
 Our spirits from their urns.

'Twas such a night!

'Tis strange that I recall it at this time ;  
 But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight  
 Even at the moment when they should array  
 Themselves in pensive order.

## THE CORSAIR

### Canto I.

#### XI

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent  
 To lead the guilty—guilt's worse instrument—  
 His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven  
 Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven,

Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,  
In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool ;  
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,  
Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,  
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,  
And not the traitors who betrayed him still ; 10  
Nor deem'd that gifts bestow'd on better men  
Had left him joy, and means to give again.  
Fear'd, shunn'd, belied, ere youth had lost her force,  
He hated man too much to feel remorse,  
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,  
To pay the injuries of some on all.  
He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd  
The rest no better than the thing he seem'd ;  
And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid  
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did. 20  
He knew himself detested, but he knew  
The hearts that loath'd him, crouch'd and dreaded too.  
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt  
From all affection and from all contempt ;  
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise ;  
But they that fear'd him dared not to despise :  
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake  
The slumbering venom of the folded snake :  
The first may turn, but not avenge the blow ;  
The last expires, but leaves no living foe ; 30  
Fast to the doom'd offender's form it clings,  
And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings !

## XII

None are all evil—quickenings round his heart  
One softer feeling would not yet depart ;  
Oft could he sneer at others as beguiled  
By passions worthy of a fool or child ;

Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove.  
 And even in him it asks the name of Love !  
 Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,  
 Felt but for one from whom he never ranged ; 40  
 Though fairest captives daily met his eye,  
 He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by :  
 Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,  
 None ever sooth'd his most unguarded hour.  
 Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness  
 Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by distress,  
 Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,  
 And yet—oh more than all ! untired by time ;  
 Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,  
 Could render sullen were she near to smile, 50  
 Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent  
 On her one murmur of his discontent ;  
 Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,  
 Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart ;  
 Which nought removed, nor menaced to remove—  
 If there be love in mortals—this was love !  
 He was a villain—ay, reproaches shower  
 On him—but not the passion, nor its power,  
 Which only proved, all other virtues gone,  
 Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one ! 60

## DON JUAN

## DEDICATION

## I

BOB SOUTHEY ! You're a poet—Poet-laureate,  
 And representative of all the race ;  
 Although 'tis true that you turned out a Tory at  
 Last,—yours has lately been a common case ;  
 And now, my Epic Renegade ! what are ye at ?  
 With all the Lakers in and out of place ?

A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye  
Like 'four-and-twenty Blackbirds in a pye'.

## II

'Which pye being opened they began to sing'  
(This old song and new simile holds good) 10  
'A dainty dish to set before the King',  
Or Regent, who admires such kind of food ;—  
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,  
But like a hawk encumbered with his hood,—  
Explaining Metaphysics to the nation—  
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

. . . . .

## IV

And Wordsworth, in a rather long 'Excursion',  
(I think the quarto holds five hundred pages)  
Has given a sample from the vasty version  
Of his new system, to perplex the sages ; 20  
'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,  
And may appear so when the dog-star rages—  
And he who understands it would be able  
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

. . . . .

## VII

Your bays may hide the baldness of your brows—  
Perhaps some virtuous blushes ;—let them go—  
To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs—  
And for the fame you would engross below,  
The field is universal and allows  
Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow : 30  
Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe, will try  
'Gainst you the question with posterity.



PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822) was educated at Eton and at University College, Oxford, from which he was expelled for sending a tract on the 'Necessity of Atheism' to all the Bishops and Heads of Houses. He was keenly interested in politics, and several of his prose works deal with Irish questions. On every subject he showed himself the wildest and most thorough of revolutionists, and throughout his life he never ceased to proclaim the equality of all men. *Queen Mab* appeared in 1813. In 1816 came *Alastor*, and in the same year he and Byron travelled together in Switzerland. *The Revolt of Islam* was published in 1818; *Rosalind and Helen* appeared with other poems in 1819, and the same year saw the production of *The Cenci: a Tragedy in five acts*. *Prometheus Unbound* appeared in 1820. The *Ode to the West Wind* was written in 1819, as was *Peter Bell the Third*, which was not published till 1839. In 1820 he wrote the *Epistle to Maria Gisborne*, *The Witch of Atlas*, and a large number of lyrics, including *The Sensitive Plant* and *The Skylark*. *Epipsychidion*, the *Defence of Poetry*, and *Adonais* appeared in 1821, and *Hellas* in 1822. In July, 1822, Shelley was drowned off the coast between Leghorn and Spezia.

## REVOLT OF ISLAM

### Canto IX.

#### XXV

THIS is the winter of the world ;—and here

We die, even as the winds of Autumn fade,  
Expiring in the frore and foggy air.—

Behold ! Spring comes, though we must pass, who  
made

The promise of its birth,—even as the shade  
Which from our death, as from a mountain, flings

The future, a broad sunrise ; thus arrayed  
As with the plumes of overshadowing wings,  
From its dark gulf of chains, Earth like an eagle springs.

## XVI

O dearest love! we shall be dead and cold 10

Before this morn may on the world arise ;  
Wouldst thou the glory of its dawn behold ?

**Alas! gaze not on me, but turn thine eyes**

**On thine own heart—it is a paradise**

**Which everlasting Spring has made its own,**

**And while drear Winter fills the naked skies,**

Sweet streams of sunny thought, and flowers fresh-blown.

**Are there, and weave their sounds and odours into one.**

## XXVII

**In their own hearts the earnest of the hope**

Which made them great, the good will ever find ; 20

**And though some envious shades may interlope**

**Between the effect and it, One comes behind.**

**Who aye the future to the past will bind—**

**Necessity, whose sightless strength for ever**

**Evil with evil, good with good must wind**

**In bands of union, which no power may sever:**

**They must bring forth their kind, and be divided never!**

## XVIII

## The good and mighty of departed ages

Are in their graves, the innocent and free,

**Heroes, and Poets, and prevailing Sages,**

**Who leave the vesture of their majesty**

To adorn and clothe this naked world ;—and we

**Are like to them—such perish, but they leave**

**All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty.**

Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive,

**To be a rule and law to ages that survive.**

## XXIX

So be the turf heaped over our remains  
 Even in our happy youth, and that strange lot,  
 Whate'er it be, when in these mingling veins  
 The blood is still, be ours ; let sense and thought 40  
 Pass from our being, or be numbered not  
 Among the things that are ; let those who come  
 Behind, for whom our steadfast will has bought  
 A <sup>fair</sup> ~~dam~~ inheritance, a glorious doom,  
 Insult with careless tread, our undivided tomb.

## XXX

Our many thoughts and deeds, our life and love,  
 Our happiness, and all that we have been,  
 Immortally must live, and burn and move  
 When we shall be no more ;—the world has seen  
 A type of peace ; and—as some most serene 50  
 And lovely spot to a poor maniac's eye,  
 After long years, some sweet and moving scene  
 Of youthful hope, returning suddenly,  
 Quells his long madness—thus man shall remember thee.

## PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

Act II, Scenes IV and V.

*Asia.* THE rocks are cloven, and through the purple  
 night

I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds  
 Which trample the dim winds : in each there stands  
 A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.  
 Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,  
 And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars :  
 Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink

With eager lips the wind of their own speed,  
As if the thing they loved fled on before,  
And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks  
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all 11  
Sweep onward.

*Demogorgon.* These are the immortal Hours,  
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

*Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful countenance  
Checks its dark chariot by the craggy gulf.  
Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,  
Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou bear me? Speak!

*Spirit.* I am the shadow of a destiny  
More dread than is my aspect: ere yon planet  
Has set, the darkness which ascends with me 20  
Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne.

*Asia.* What meanest thou?

*Panthea.* That terrible shadow floats  
Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke  
Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.  
Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly  
Terrified: watch its path among the stars  
Blackening the night!

*Asia.* Thus I am answered: strange!

*Panthea.* See, near the verge, another chariot stays;  
An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,  
Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim 30  
Of delicate strange tracery; the young spirit  
That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;  
How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light  
Lures winged insects through the lampless air.

*Spirit.*

My coursers are fed with the lightning,  
They drink of the whirlwind's stream,

And when the red morning is bright'ning  
 They bathe in the fresh sunbeam ;  
 They have strength for their swiftness I deem.  
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean. 40  
 I desire : and their speed makes night kindle ;  
 I fear : they outstrip the Typhoon ;  
 Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle  
 We encircle the earth and the moon :  
 We shall rest from long labours at noon :  
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

### ODE TO THE WEST WIND

#### I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,  
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,  
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes : O thou,  
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed  
 The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow  
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill 10  
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
 With living hues and odours plain and hill :  
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere ;  
 Destroyer and preserver ; hear, oh, hear !

#### II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,  
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,  
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning : there are spread  
On the blue surface of thine æry surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head 20  
Of some fierce Maenad<sup>1</sup>, even from the dim verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,  
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge  
Of the dying year, to which this closing night  
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might  
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst : oh, hear !

## III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay, 30  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,  
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,  
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them ! Thou  
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers  
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below  
The sea-bloom sand the oozy woods which wear  
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know 40  
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves : oh, hear !

## IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

<sup>1</sup> i. e. Bacchante : the women-worshippers of Dionysus.

The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
 Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
 I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,  
 As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed  
 Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

50

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.  
 Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
 I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed  
 One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

## v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:  
 What if my leaves are falling like its own!  
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,  
 Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,  
 My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

60

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
 Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!  
 And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth  
 Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!  
 Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,  
 If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

70

## ADONAI'S

## AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS

Lines 343-495.

## XXXIX

PEACE, peace ! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—  
 He hath awakened from the dream of life—  
 'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
 With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
 And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife  
 Invulnerable nothings.—*We* decay  
 Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and grief  
 Convulse us and consume us day by day, 350  
 And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

## XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our night ;  
 Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
 And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
 Can touch him not and torture not again ;  
 From the contagion of the world's slow stain  
 He is secure, and now can never mourn  
 A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain ;  
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,  
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn. 360

## XLI

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he :  
 Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,  
 Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone ;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan !  
 Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,  
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown  
 O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair !



## XLII

He is made one with Nature: there is heard 370  
His voice in all her music, from the moan  
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird ;  
He is a presence to be felt and known  
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,  
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move  
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;  
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,  
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

## XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness  
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear 380  
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress  
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there  
All new successions to the forms they wear ;  
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight  
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear ;  
And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

## XLIV

The splendours of the firmament of time  
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;  
Like stars to their appointed height they climb, 390  
And death is a low mist which cannot blot  
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought  
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
And love and life contend in it, for what  
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there  
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

## XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,  
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton  
Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not 400  
Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he fought  
And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
Arose ; and Lucan<sup>1</sup>, by his death approved :  
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

## XLVI

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark.  
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die  
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
'Thou art become as one of us,' they cry, 410  
'It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long  
Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.  
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng !'

## XLVII

Who mourns for Adonais ? Oh, come forth,  
Fond wretch ! and know thyself and him aright.  
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth ;  
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light  
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might  
Sate the void circumference : then shrink 420  
Even to a point within our day and night ;  
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink  
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

<sup>1</sup> Roman poet (A. D. 39-65) put to death by Nero.

## XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,  
 Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought  
 That ages, empires, and religions there  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;  
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow not  
 Glory from those who made the world their prey;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought 430  
 Who waged contention with their time's decay,  
 And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

## XLIX

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,  
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness  
 Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead 440  
 A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread;

## L

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time  
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;  
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,  
 Pavilioning the dust of him who planned  
 This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
 Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

## LI

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet 451  
 To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned  
 Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,  
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find  
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind  
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

## LII

The One remains, the many change and pass; 460  
 Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,  
 If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!  
 Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,  
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak  
 The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

## LIII

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?  
 Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here 470  
 They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!  
 A light is passed from the revolving year,  
 And man, and woman; and what still is dear  
 Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.  
 The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near:  
 'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,  
 No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

## LIV

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,  
 That Beauty in which all things work and move,  
 That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse 480  
 Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love  
 Which through the web of being blindly wove  
 By man and beast and earth and air and sea,  
 Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
 The fire for which all thirst ; now beams on me,  
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

## LV

The breath whose might I have invoked in song  
 Descends on me ; my spirit's bark is driven,  
 Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng  
 Whose sails were never to the tempest given ; 490  
 The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven !  
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar ;  
 Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
 Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821) was the son of a London livery-stableman. He left school at fifteen, and was apprenticed to a surgeon, but he kept up a close intimacy with a school friend, Charles Cowden Clarke, who encouraged his taste for literature. He was so much impressed by the *Faerie Queene*, that as soon as he read it he began writing verses in imitation of Spenser, and his first introduction to Homer (in Chapman's translation) resulted in one of his finest sonnets (1815). In 1816 he met Leigh Hunt, and became strongly influenced by him. His first appearance in print was made in Hunt's paper, *The Examiner*, in which, in 1816, the sonnet on Chapman's Homer also appeared. In 1817 the first volume of his poems was published, followed in 1818 by *Endymion*. In 1819 he composed the odes 'On Indolence,' 'On a Grecian Urn,' 'To Psyche,' 'On a Nightingale,'

and that 'To Melancholy' probably belongs to the same year, as does the ballad of 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'. Keats's health now showed signs of giving way, but he continued to work rapidly. In the later part of 1819 he and Brown wrote the tragedy of *Otho the Great*, and he began another tragedy on *King Stephen*, finished 'Lamia', added to 'The Eve of St. Mark', and wrote the 'Ode to Autumn'. *Lamia, Isabella, the Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems* appeared in 1820, the 'other poems' including *Hyperion*. His health grew rapidly worse; he went to Italy to see if the milder climate could save him, and died in Rome at the age of twenty-six. His letters were published posthumously.

## HYPERION

Thea, wife of the Sun-god, finds Saturn, the deposed king of the Titans, 'deep in the shady sadness of a vale,' and tries to comfort him.

As when upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave :  
So came these words and went ; the while in tears  
She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,  
Just where her falling hair might be outspread 10  
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless,  
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;  
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,  
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone.

And all the gloom and sorrow of the place, 20  
And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake  
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard  
Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :  
' O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face ;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it ;  
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's ; tell me if thou hear'st the voice  
Of Saturn ; tell me if this wrinkling brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem, 30  
Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power  
To make me desolate ? whence came the strength ?  
How was it nurtured to such bursting forth,  
While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous grasp ?  
But it is so ; and I am smother'd up  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale,  
Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme 40  
Doth ease its heart of love in. I am gone  
Away from my own bosom : I have left  
My strong identity, my real self,  
Somewhere between the throne and where I sit  
Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea, search !  
Open thine eyes eterne and sphere them round  
Upon all space ; space starr'd, and lorn of light :  
Space region'd with life-air, and barren void ;  
Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.  
Search, Thea, search ! and tell me if thou seest 50  
A certain shape or shadow making way  
With wings or chariot fierce to re-possess  
A heaven he lost erewhile : it must—it must

Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be king.  
Yes, there must be a golden victory ;  
There must be Gods thrown down and trumpets blown  
Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival  
Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be 60  
Beautiful things made new for the surprise  
Of the sky-children ; I will give command :  
Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ?'

## ODE TO AUTUMN

## I

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run ;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease, 10  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

## II

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers :



And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
 Steady thy laden head across a brook ; 20  
 Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,  
 Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

## III

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?  
 Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—  
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;  
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
 Among the river salallows, borne aloft  
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;  
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ; 30  
 Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with treble soft  
 The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft ;  
 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

## I

AH, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 Alone and palely loitering ;  
 The sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

## II

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 So haggard and so woe-begone ?  
 The squirrel's granary is full,  
 And the harvest's done.

## III

I see a lily on thy brow,  
 With anguish moist and fever dew ; 10  
 And on thy cheek a fading rose  
 Fast withereth too.

## IV

I met a lady in the meads  
Full beautiful, a faery's child ;  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

## V

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long ;  
For sideways would she lean, and sing  
A faery's song.

20

## VI

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

## VII

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild, and manna dew ;  
And sure in language strange she said,  
'I love thee true.'

## VIII

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep,  
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—  
So kiss'd to sleep.

80

## IX

And there we slumber'd on the moss,  
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hillside.

## X

I saw pale kings, and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;  
Who cried—'La belle Dame sans merci  
Hath thee in thrall !'

## XI

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke, and found me here  
On the cold hillside.

## XII

And this is why I sojourn here  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

## STANZAS I-VII.

## I

ST. AGNES' EVE—Ah, bitter chill it was !  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold ;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold :  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told  
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

## II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man ; 10  
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,  
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :  
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze, '  
Imprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,  
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails  
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

## III

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue 20  
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;  
But no—already had his deathbell rung :  
The joys of all his life were said and sung :  
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve :  
Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

## IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;  
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,  
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft, 30  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :  
The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :  
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their  
breasts.

## V

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily  
The brain, new-stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay 40  
Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,  
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

## VI

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adorings from their loves receive  
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright ; 50  
As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily white ;  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

## VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline :  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes divine,  
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train  
Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain  
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, 60  
And back retir'd ; not cool'd by high disdain,  
But she saw not : her heart was elsewhere :  
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

## STANZAS XXIII-XXVII.

Porphyro, Madeline's lover, persuades her nurse Angela to conceal him in her chamber. When he is concealed Madeline comes in to await the vision.

## XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;  
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :  
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin  
To spirits of the air and visions wide :  
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide !  
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
Paining with eloquence her balmy side ; 70  
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

## XXIV

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;  
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings, 80  
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and  
kings.

## XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon ;  
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :  
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven :—Porphyro grew faint  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint. 90

## XXVI

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,  
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;  
 Uncasps her warmed jewels one by one ;  
 Loosens her fragrant bodice ; by degrees  
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees :  
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,  
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

## XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest, 100  
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,  
 Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd  
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;  
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;  
 Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ;  
 Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray ;  
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
 As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

## STANZAS XXXVII—XLII.

Porphyro comes forward and declares his passion.

## XXXVII

'Tis dark : quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet :  
 'This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline !' 110  
 'Tis dark : the iced gusts still rave and beat :  
 'No dream, alas ! alas ! and woe is mine !  
 Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—

Cruel ! what traitor could thee hither bring ?  
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing ;—  
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing.'

## XXXVIII

' My Madeline ! sweet dreamer ! lovely bride !  
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest ?  
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dyed ?  
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest 121  
After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle.  
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest  
Saving of thy sweet self ; if thou think'st well  
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

## XXXIX

' Hark ! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :  
Arise—arise ! the morning is at hand ;—  
The bloated wassaillers will never heed :— 130  
Let us away, my love, with happy speed ;  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—  
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :  
Awake ! arise ! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.

## XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—  
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—  
In all the house was heard no human sound.



A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door ;  
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar ;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

## XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall ;  
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide ;  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side :  
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns : 150  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide :—  
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones ;—  
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

## XLII

And they are gone : aye, ages long ago  
These lovers fled away into the storm.  
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form  
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old  
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform ; 160  
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE NOVELISTS

AMONG the many diversities and variations of the eighteenth-century novel there are two types which alternately influenced the generations that followed. The novels of Fielding are on the epic scale; each contains material for a dozen stories of our modern dimensions; they range over a wide expanse of country, and pass with a free step from character-study to romance, and from picaresque incident to heroic adventure. The novels of Goldsmith and Madame D'Arblay lie in a more restricted field: they are concerned with narrower issues and more concentrated topics; the episodes are more carefully selected and more closely related to a single plot. In the fiction of the early nineteenth century the one tendency is represented by Scott and the other by Jane Austen.

Scott is the natural successor of Fielding. He inherits an even broader realm, he administers it with the same policy of sympathy and toleration. Indeed, the only restriction which we can place on his genius is to say that it is most successful amid scenes and characters with which he is personally familiar. His English novels, his stories of foreign romance, strike us in the main as extraordinarily able *tours de force*: the Scottish part of *Rob Roy* is worth ten of the English; and even masterpieces like *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman* are masterpieces on the outside; they have not the natural intimate spontaneity of *The Antiquary* and *Old Mortality*,

and Wandering Willie's tale in *Redgauntlet*. In his own domain he is unsurpassed. His breadth of interest, his catholic sympathy, his humour—the kindest in all literature—not only hold our attention, but awaken us to a sense of personal regard and love. Precisians have told us that his style is slipshod, and have accounted for this by the haste at which his work was written<sup>1</sup>. The fact is that he had two styles. In descriptive passages, and especially in the introductions and settings of his narrative, he often adopted a conventional 'romantic' manner which sat uneasily upon him and which moves with a certain want of grace and elasticity. In dialogue he has all the careless ease of good conversation: it is direct, picturesque, full of warmth and colour, which more than atones—if indeed atonement were needed—for an occasional lapse from strict accuracy. His portraits of his own countrymen are admirable:—Edie Ochiltree and Monkbarns, Captain Dugald Dalgetty, Baillie Nicol Jarvie, Cuddie Headrigg and his mother—these and a hundred others are among the permanent possessions of our art. Grant that the workmanship is unequal, that towards the end there are evidences of the tired hand and the overwrought brain, there is no fear of the verdict if posterity judges him by his best.

In Jane Austen's work there is no such inequality. Readers will always find preferences among her six novels, most will probably assign the first place to *Pride and Prejudice*<sup>2</sup>: but through all alike there is the same perfection of finish and almost the same subtlety of insight. Her style is as delicate as the wash of a water-colour: not a stroke is misplaced, not a brush-mark is over-prominent. Her humour,

<sup>1</sup> In his manuscript there are often many pages together without a single correction.

<sup>2</sup> Macaulay assigned it to *Mansfield Park*.

at its broadest in Miss Bates and Mr. Collins, is often so demure that you read the page twice over to make certain that she intended the jest. Her character drawing is wonderfully just and accurate, set in a comparatively narrow range, but placed and developed with an unerring hand. She particularly excels in the delineation of women—Emma, for instance, and Elinor Dashwood, and Elizabeth Bennet, who is the most charming of them all—yet if her men are somewhat stiff and patronising, we have reason to believe that so were their prototypes. Above all, she has a sense of proportion which sees each incident in its exact relation to the story as a whole. The private theatricals in *Mansfield Park* are as tragic as the breakfast scene in *Eugénie Grandet*: we tell ourselves that the matter is of little moment, but we do not think it so while we read it. Charlotte Brontë complained of her that she does not ‘stir the blood’: but this only means that her world is gentler than the world of *Jane Eyre* and of *Shirley*, and of that grim and saturnine masterpiece *Wuthering Heights*<sup>1</sup>. Her genius is quiet not cautious, serene not timid, and its lightest creations are made significant by the perspective in which they are displayed.

The names of Dickens and Thackeray have come down to us as correlatives: they support each other like Pitt and Fox, or Disraeli and Gladstone. But each stood on his own feet, and each was enough to make memorable the fiction of our mid-century. Dickens is described once for all in Fitzgerald’s inspired phrase ‘a cockney Shakespeare’. He works in a less precious metal: there is too much horse-play in *Pickwick*, Little Nell is intolerable; one of the novels is called *Our Mutual Friend*—he gives a hundred hostages to criticism if it choose to enforce its claim. But he possessed two essential

<sup>1</sup> By Charlotte Brontë’s younger sister Emily.

qualities in fuller measure than any other English novelist—vitality and resource. His power of creation is unlimited: the stage is crammed with succession after succession of characters, all distinct, all salient, all impossible to forget. Sam Weller has passed into a proverb; so have Mrs. Gamp and Bumble and Sikes and Crummles and Dolly Varden; Commodore Bunsby makes a single speech, and we have used it ever since as a political argument. The tragedy is often melodrama, but it is the best melodrama ever written; the comedy ranges from irresistible farce to such delicate and restrained humour as the scene in which the Father of the Marshalsea receives his old dependent. Again, he never satirizes unless he has an abuse to attack—Dotheboys' Hall, which brought him two threats of actions at law, the Circumlocution office, the tyranny of the workhouse, the delays of the Court of Chancery; apart from a few irredeemable villains he loves his children and he makes us love them. Sometimes, as in Mr. Boffin, he passes the bounds of possibility; sometimes, as in Mr. Sapsea, he transcends the limits of burlesque, but no man since Shakespeare has enriched our circle of acquaintance with so large an abundance of entertaining people.

In point of literary form Thackeray is by far the finer artist. We read a page of his writing with the same pleasure with which we listen to a great player at the keyboard: there is the same gradation of tone, the same perfection of phrase and rhythm, the same mastery of technique, which would make it all seem so easy if we did not already know that it was so difficult. But of all great artists he is, on the whole, the least sympathetic. When he is not moved by personal feeling we can admire him without reservation: *Esmond* ranks with Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth* as the first of our historical novels; the *Lectures on the English Humorists* are

among the treasures of our criticism. But when he deals with contemporary life everything in his hand turns to satire. 'Chacun de ses détails,' says Taine<sup>1</sup>, 'est un sarcasme': and the sarcasm is always directed against the reader. Swift, raging under a baffled ideal, tries to make us hate mankind; Thackeray, with far less idealistic purpose, comes near to making us hate ourselves. It is we who are the snobs, it is we who cringe and envy and bully and intrigue: the preacher stands with uplifted finger and denunciatory voice, and we know all the while that he is not telling us the whole matter. Thackeray's world is one which we neither acknowledge nor admit; it is the dark side of the picture alone, it is the lie which is half a truth. We know that a man may be honourable without being clumsy like Dobbin, or a featherhead like Pendennis, or a surly grumbler like Warrington or Philip Firmin. We know that a woman can have brains without being a little fiend like Blanche Amory, or an unscrupulous adventuress like Becky Sharp. But we do not learn this from Thackeray. His strong characters are odious, his good characters are anaemic, and all alike are topics in a sermon which bids us take shame for our human nature<sup>2</sup>.

There are a few passages of exquisite tenderness—the scene, for instance, in which Clive Newcome looks across the church at Ethel—and under all the cynicism one feels that there is a soft and sensitive heart. But the plea of self-protection is not really availing. It is with Thackeray the author that we are concerned: that great genius, vivid in description, pungent in wit, faultless in style, who used his magnificent gifts to conceal affection, to disparage success, and to make us laugh bitterly

<sup>1</sup> *Essais de Critique et d'Histoire*, first edition, p. 152. This volume contains two interesting studies of Dickens and Thackeray.

<sup>2</sup> A striking example is the degradation of Colonel Newcome.

because the human soul is sick beyond hope of cure. He might have been the first of English prose writers had he realized his own maxim, that 'if fun is good, truth is better, and love best of all'.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832) early showed an interest in ballad literature and in mediaeval history. In 1796 he published a translation of Bürger's *Lenore*, and a companion ballad, *The Wild Huntsman*. In 1802 came the first two volumes of *Border Minstrelsy*, and a third volume followed in 1803. In 1805 he published *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which gained a great and immediate popularity. He had already begun *Waverley*, though it was not published till some years later. In 1808 came *Marmion*, in 1810 *The Lady of the Lake*, in 1812 *Rokeby* and *The Bridal of Triermain*. Scott was lavish by nature, and in spite of the large sums which he made by his poems, was often distressed for money. In 1814, in the midst of monetary troubles, he came across the manuscript of *Waverley* and finished it. It was published in July, 1814, and the first edition sold in five weeks. One novel now followed another with amazing rapidity. In 1815 came *Guy Mannering*; 1816, *The Antiquary*; 1817, *Tales of my Landlord (The Black Dwarf, Old Mortality)*; 1818, *Rob Roy and Tales of my Landlord*, 2nd series (*Heart of Midlothian*); 1819, 3rd series (*The Bride of Lammermoor: A Legend of Montrose*); 1820, *Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot*; 1821, *Kenilworth*; 1822, *The Pirate, The Fortunes of Nigel, Peveril of the Peak*; 1823, *Quentin Durward*; 1824, *St. Ronan's Well, Redgauntlet*; 1825, *The Talisman*. In 1825-6 the great publishing houses of Ballantyne and Constable, in whose management Scott had a share, failed. Scott determined to devote his life to paying off the creditors, and he set to work to produce more novels in order to raise the money. *Woodstock* appeared in 1827; *Chronicles of the Canongate* in the same year; *Tales of a Grandfather* (1st series) in 1828; *Chronicles of the Canongate* (2nd series, including *The Fair Maid of Perth*), 1828; *Anne of Gierstein*, 1829; *Tales of my Landlord* (4th series), 1832. He also produced a large number of less important works in verse and prose, and edited the works of Dryden and Swift. Towards the end his mind became clouded, and he died worn out by

sorrow and hard work. Besides his literary activity, he practised at the Bar for many years, and was sheriff of his county. He was made a baronet by the Prince Regent, who greatly admired his writings.

## OLD MORTALITY

### CHAPTER VIII

Bothwell and his troopers, in the search for Covenanters, have come to the house of the niggardly laird of Milnwood, the uncle of Henry Morton. Bothwell is questioning the old laird.

‘You attend Poundtext, the presbyterian parson, I understand, Mr. Morton?’

Mr. Morton hastened to slide in a confession and apology.

‘By the indulgence of his gracious majesty and the government—for I wad do nothing out of law—I hae nae objection whatever to the establishment of a moderate episcopacy, but only that I am a country-bred man, and the ministers are a hamelier kind of folk, and I can follow their doctrine better; and, with reverence, sir, it’s a mair frugal establishment for the country.’

‘Well, I care nothing about that,’ said Bothwell; ‘they are indulged, and there’s an end of it; but, for my part, if I were to give the law, never a crop-ear’d cur of the whole pack should bark in a Scotch pulpit. However, I am to obey commands.—There comes the liquor; put it down, my good old lady.’

He decanted about one-half of a quart bottle of claret into a wooden quaigh or bicker, and took it off at a draught.

‘You did your good wine an injustice, my friend;—it’s better than your brandy, though that’s good too. Will you pledge me to the king’s health?’

‘With pleasure,’ said Milnwood, ‘in ale,—but I never drink claret, and keep only a very little for some honoured friends.’



‘Like me, I suppose,’ said Bothwell ; and then, pushing the bottle to Henry, he said, ‘Here, young man, pledge you the king’s health.’

Henry filled a moderate glass in silence, regardless of the hints and pushes of his uncle, which seemed to indicate that he ought to have followed his example, in preferring beer to wine.

‘Well,’ said Bothwell, ‘have ye all drank the toast?—What is that old wife about? Give her a glass of brandy, she shall drink the king’s health, by’——

‘If your honour pleases,’ said Cuddie, with great stolidity of aspect, ‘this is my mither, stir ; and she’s as deaf as Corra-linn ; we canna mak her hear day nor door ; but if your honour pleases, I am ready to drink the king’s health for her in as mony glasses of brandy as ye think neshessary.’

‘I dare swear you are,’ answered Bothwell ; ‘you look like a fellow that would stick to brandy—help thyself, man ; all’s free where’er I come.—Tom, help the maid to a comfortable cup, though she’s but a dirty jilt neither. Fill round once more—Here’s to our noble commander, Colonel Graham of Claverhouse!—What the devil is the old woman groaning for? She looks as very a whig as ever sate on a hill-side—Do you renounce the Covenant, good woman?’

‘Whilk Covenant is your honour meaning? Is it the Covenant of Works, or the Covenant of Grace?’ said Cuddie, interposing.

‘Any covenant ; all covenants that ever were hatched,’ answered the trooper.

‘Mither,’ cried Cuddie, affecting to speak as to a deaf person, ‘the gentleman wants to ken if ye will renounce the Covenant of Works?’

‘With all my heart, Cuddie,’ said Mause, ‘and pray that my feet may be delivered from the snare thereof.’

‘Come,’ said Bothwell, ‘the old dame has come more frankly off than I expected. Another cup round, and then we’ll proceed to business.—You have all heard, I suppose, of the horrid and barbarous murder committed upon the person of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, by ten or eleven armed fanatics?’

All started and looked at each other; at length Milnwood himself answered, ‘They had heard of some such misfortune, but were in hopes it had not been true.’

‘There is the relation published by government, old gentleman; what do you think of it?’

‘Think, sir? Wh—wh—whatever the council please to think of it,’ stammered Milnwood.

‘I desire to have your opinion more explicitly, my friend,’ said the dragoon, authoritatively.

Milnwood’s eyes hastily glanced through the paper to pick out the strongest expressions of censure with which it abounded, in gleaning which he was greatly aided by their being printed in italics.

‘I think it a—bloody and execrable—murder and parricide—devised by hellish and implacable cruelty—utterly abominable, and a scandal to the land.’

‘Well said, old gentleman!’ said the querist—‘Here’s to thee, and I wish you joy of your good principles. You owe me a cup of thanks for having taught you them; nay, thou shalt pledge me in thine own sack—sour ale sits ill upon a loyal stomach.—Now comes your turn, young man; what think you of the matter in hand?’

‘I should have little objection to answer you,’ said Henry, ‘if I knew what right you had to put the question.’

‘The Lord preserve us!’ said the old housekeeper, ‘to ask the like o’ that at a trooper, when a’ folk ken they do

whatever they like through the hail country wi' man and woman, beast and body.'

The old gentleman exclaimed, in the same horror at his nephew's audacity, 'Hold your peace, sir, or answer the gentleman discreetly. Do you mean to affront the king's authority in the person of a sergeant of the Life-Guards?'

'Silence, all of you!' exclaimed Bothwell, striking his hand fiercely on the table—'Silence, every one of you, and hear me!—You ask me for my right to examine you, sir (to Henry); my cockade and my broadsword are my commission, and a better one than ever Old Nol gave to his roundheads; and if you want to know more about it, you may look at the act of council empowering his majesty's officers and soldiers to search for, examine, and apprehend suspicious persons; and, therefore, once more, I ask you your opinion of the death of Archbishop Sharpe—it's a new touchstone we have got for trying people's metal.'

Henry had, by this time, reflected upon the useless risk to which he would expose the family by resisting the tyrannical power which was delegated to such rude hands; he therefore read the narrative over, and replied, composedly, 'I have no hesitation to say, that the perpetrators of this assassination have committed, in my opinion, a rash and wicked action, which I regret the more, as I foresee it will be made the cause of proceedings against many who are both innocent of the deed, and as far from approving it as myself.'

While Henry thus expressed himself, Bothwell, who bent his eyes keenly upon him, seemed suddenly to recollect his features.

'Aha! my friend Captain Popinjay, I think I have seen you before, and in very suspicious company.'

'I saw you once,' answered Henry, 'in the public-house of the town of——.'

'And with whom did you leave that public-house, youngster?—Was it not with John Balfour of Burley, one of the murderers of the Archbishop?'

'I did leave the house with the person you have named,' answered Henry, 'I scorn to deny it; but, so far from knowing him to be a murderer of the primate, I did not even know at the time that such a crime had been committed.'

'Lord have mercy on me, I am ruined!—utterly ruined and undone!' exclaimed Milnwood. 'That callant's tongue will rin the head aff his ain shoulders, and waste my gudes to the very grey cloak on my back!'

'But you knew Burley,' continued Bothwell, still addressing Henry, and regardless of his uncle's interruption, 'to be an intercommuned rebel and traitor, and you knew the prohibition to deal with such persons. You knew, that, as a loyal subject, you were prohibited to reset, supply, or intercommune with this attainted traitor, to correspond with him by word, writ, or message, or to supply him with meat, drink, house, harbour, or victual, under the highest pains—you knew all this, and yet you broke the law.' (Henry was silent.) 'Where did you part from him?' continued Bothwell; 'was it in the highway, or did you give him harbourage in this very house?'

'In this house!' said his uncle; 'he dared not for his neck bring ony traitor into a house of mine.'

'Dare he deny that he did so?' said Bothwell.

'As you charge it to me as a crime,' said Henry, 'you will excuse my saying any thing that will criminate myself.'

'O, the lands of Milnwood!—the bonny lands of Miln-

wood, that have been in the name of Morton twa hundred years !' exclaimed his uncle ; ' they are barking<sup>1</sup> and fleeing, outfield and infield, haugh<sup>2</sup> and holme<sup>3</sup> !'

' No, sir,' said Henry, ' you shall not suffer on my account.—I own,' he continued, addressing Bothwell, ' I did give this man a night's lodging as to an old military comrade of my father. But it was not only without my uncle's knowledge, but contrary to his express general orders. I trust, if my evidence is considered as good against myself, it will have some weight in proving my uncle's innocence.'

' Come, young man,' said the soldier, in a somewhat milder tone, ' you're a smart spark enough, and I am sorry for you ; and your uncle here is a fine old Trojan, kinder, I see, to his guests than himself, for he gives us wine and drinks his own thin ale—tell me all you know about this Burley, what he said when you parted from him, where he went, and where he is likely now to be found ; and, d—n it, I'll wink as hard on your share of the business as my duty will permit. There's a thousand merks on the murdering whigamore's head, an I could but light on it.—Come, out with it—where did you part with him ?'

' You will excuse my answering that question, sir,' said Morton ; ' the same cogent reasons which induced me to afford him hospitality at considerable risk to myself and my friends, would command me to respect his secret, if, indeed, he had trusted me with any.'

' So you refuse to give me an answer ?' said Bothwell.

' I have none to give,' returned Henry.

<sup>1</sup> Falling into ruin : see Longmuir's ' Scottish Dictionary', s. v.

<sup>2</sup> Yard or close (same word as ' the Hague ').

<sup>3</sup> Meadow : esp. on a river bank.

‘Perhaps I could teach you to find one, by tying a piece of lighted match betwixt your fingers,’ answered Bothwell.

‘O, for pity’s sake, sir,’ said old Alison apart to her master, ‘gie them siller—it’s siller they’re seeking—they’ll murder Mr. Henry, and yoursell next!’

Milnwood groaned in perplexity and bitterness of spirit, and, with a tone as if he was giving up the ghost, exclaimed, ‘If twenty p—p—punds would make up this unhappy matter’——

‘My master,’ insinuated Alison to the sergeant, ‘would gie twenty pounds sterling’——

‘Punds Scotch!’ interrupted Milnwood; for the agony of his avarice overcame alike his puritanic precision and the habitual respect he entertained for his housekeeper.

‘Punds sterling,’ insisted the housekeeper, ‘if ye wad hae the gudeness to look ower the lad’s misconduct; he’s that dour ye might tear him to pieces, and ye wad ne’er get a word out o’ him; and it wad do ye little gude, I’m sure, to burn his bonny finger-ends.’

‘Why,’ said Bothwell, hesitating, ‘I don’t know—most of my cloth would have the money, and take off the prisoner too; but I bear a conscience, and if your master will stand to your offer, and enter into a bond to produce his nephew, and if all in the house will take the test-oath, I do not know but’——

‘O ay, ay, sir,’ cried Mrs. Wilson, ‘ony test, ony oaths ye please!’ And then aside to her master, ‘Haste ye away, sir, and get the siller, or they will burn the house about our lugs<sup>2</sup>.’

Old Milnwood cast a rueful look upon his adviser, and moved off, like a piece of Dutch clockwork, to set at liberty his imprisoned angels in this dire emergency. Meanwhile, Sergeant Bothwell began to put the test-oath

<sup>1</sup> A ‘Pound Scotch’ is twenty pence.

<sup>2</sup> Ears.

with such a degree of solemn reverence as might have been expected, being just about the same which is used to this day in his majesty's custom-house.

'You—what's your name, woman?'

'Alison Wilson, sir.'

'You, Alison Wilson, solemnly swear, certify, and declare, that you judge it unlawful for subjects, under pretext of reformation, or any other pretext whatsoever, to enter into Leagues and Covenants'——

Here the ceremony was interrupted by a strife between Cuddie and his mother, which, long conducted in whispers, now became audible.

'Oh, whisht, mither, whisht! they're upon a communing—Oh! whisht, and they'll agree weel eneuch e'enow.'

'I will not whisht, Cuddie,' replied his mother, 'I will uplift my voice and spare not—I will confound the man of sin, even the scarlet man, and through my voice shall Mr. Henry be freed from the net of the fowler.'

'She has her leg ower the harrows now,' said Cuddie, 'stop her wha—I see her cocked up behind a dragoon on her way to the Tolbooth—I find my ain legs tied below a horse's belly—Ay—she has just mustered up her sermon, and there—wi' that grane—out it comes, and we are a' ruined, horse and foot!'

'And div ye think to come here,' said Mause, her withered hand shaking in concert with her keen, though wrinkled visage, animated by zealous wrath, and emancipated, by the very mention of the test, from the restraints of her own prudence, and Cuddie's admonition—'Div ye think to come here, wi' your soul-killing, saint-seducing, conscience-confounding oaths, and tests, and bands—your snares, and your traps, and your gins?—Surely it is in vain that a net is spread in the sight of any bird.'

‘Eh! what, good dame?’ said the soldier. ‘Here’s a whig miracle, egad! the old wife has got both her ears and tongue, and we are like to be driven deaf in our turn.—Go to, hold your peace, and remember whom you talk to, you old idiot.’

‘Whae do I talk to! Eh, sirs, ower weel may the sorrowing land ken what ye are. Malignant adherents ye are to the prelates, foul props to a feeble and filthy cause, bloody beasts of prey, and burdens to the earth.’

‘Upon my soul,’ said Bothwell, astonished as a mastiff-dog might be should a hen-partridge fly at him in defence of her young, ‘this is the finest language I ever heard! Can’t you give us some more of it?’

‘Gie ye some mair o’t?’ said Mause, clearing her voice with a preliminary cough, ‘I will take up my testimony against you ance and again.—Philistines ye are, and Edomites—leopards are ye, and foxes—evening wolves, that gnaw not the bones till the morrow—wicked dogs, that compass about the chosen—thrusting kine, and pushing bulls of Bashan—piercing serpents ye are, and allied baith in name and nature with the great Red Dragon; Revelations, twalfth chapter, third and fourth verses.’

Here the old lady stopped, apparently much more from lack of breath than of matter.

‘Curse the old hag!’ said one of the dragoons, ‘gag her, and take her to head-quarters.’

‘For shame, Andrews,’ said Bothwell; ‘remember the good lady belongs to the fair sex, and uses only the privilege of her tongue.—But, hark ye, good woman, every bull of Bashan and Red Dragon will not be so civil as I am, or be contented to leave you to the charge of the constable and ducking-stool. In the meantime I must necessarily carry off this young man to head-



quarters. I cannot answer to my commanding-officer to leave him in a house where I have heard so much treason and fanaticism.'

'See now, mither, what ye hae dune,' whispered Cuddie; 'there's the Philistines, as ye ca' them, are gaun to whirry awa' Mr. Henry, and a' wi' your nash-gab, deil be on't!'

'Haud yere tongue, ye cowardly loon,' said the mother, 'and layna the wyte on me; if you and thae thowless gluttons, that are sitting staring like cows bursting on clover, wad testify wi' your hands as I have testified wi' my tongue, they should never harle the precious young lad awa' to captivity.'

While this dialogue passed, the soldiers had already bound and secured their prisoner. Milnwood returned at this instant, and, alarmed at the preparations he beheld, hastened to proffer to Bothwell, though with many a grievous groan, the purse of gold which he had been obliged to rummage out as ransom for his nephew. The trooper took the purse with an air of indifference, weighed it in his hand, chucked it up into the air, and caught it as it fell, then shook his head, and said, 'There's many a merry night in this nest of yellow boys, but d—n me if I dare venture for them—that old woman has spoken too loud, and before all the men too.—Hark ye, old gentleman,' to Milnwood, 'I must take your nephew to head-quarters, so I cannot, in conscience, keep more than is my due as civility-money;' then opening the purse, he gave a gold piece to each of the soldiers, and took three to himself. 'Now,' said he, 'you have the comfort to know that your kinsman, young Captain Popinjay, will be carefully looked after and civilly used; and the rest of the money I return to you.'

Milnwood eagerly extended his hand.

‘Only you know,’ said Bothwell, still playing with the purse, ‘that every landholder is answerable for the conformity and loyalty of his household, and that these fellows of mine are not obliged to be silent on the subject of the fine sermon we have had from that old puritan in the tartan plaid there; and I presume you are aware that the consequences of delation will be a heavy fine before the council.’

‘Good sergeant,—worthy captain!’ exclaimed the terrified miser, ‘I am sure there is no person in my house, to my knowledge, would give cause of offence.’

‘Nay,’ answered Bothwell, ‘you shall hear her give her testimony, as she calls it, herself.—You fellow,’ (to Cuddie) ‘stand back, and let your mother speak her mind. I see she’s primed and loaded again since her first discharge.’

‘Lord! noble sir,’ said Cuddie, ‘an auld wife’s tongue’s but a feckless matter to mak sic a fash about. Neither my father nor me ever minded muckle what our mither said.’

‘Hold your peace, my lad, while you are well,’ said Bothwell; ‘I promise you I think you are slyer than you would like to be supposed.—Come, good dame, you see your master will not believe that you can give us so bright a testimony.’

Mause’s zeal did not require this spur to set her again on full career.

‘Woe to the compliers and carnal self-seekers,’ she said, ‘that daub over and drown their consciences by complying with wicked exactions, and giving mammon of unrighteousness to the sons of Belial, that it may make their peace with them! It is a sinful compliance, a base confederacy with the Enemy. It is the evil that Menahem did in the sight of the Lord, when he gave

a thousand talents to Pul, King of Assyria, that his hand might be with him; Second Kings, fifteen chapter, nineteen verse. It is the evil deed of Ahaz, when he sent money to Tiglath-Pileser; see the saame Second Kings, sixteen and aught. And if it was accounted a backsliding even in godly Hezekiah, that he complied with Sennacherib, giving him money, and offering to bear that which was put upon him, (see the saame Second Kings, aughteen chapter, fourteen and fifteen verses), even so it is with them that in this contumacious and backsliding generation pays localities and fees, and cess and fines, to greedy and unrighteous publicans, and extortions and stipends to hireling curates, (dumb dogs which bark not, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber), and gives gifts to be helps and hires to our oppressors and destroyers. They are all like the casters of a lot with them—like the preparing of a table for the troop, and the furnishing a drink-offering to the number.’

‘There’s a fine sound of doctrine for you, Mr. Morton! How like you that?’ said Bothwell; ‘or how do you think the Council will like it? I think we can carry the greatest part of it in our heads without a kylevine pen<sup>1</sup> and a pair of tablets, such as you bring to conventicles. She denies paying cess<sup>2</sup>, I think, Andrews?’

‘Yes,’ said Andrews; ‘and she swore it was a sin to give a trooper a pot of ale, or ask him to sit down to a table.’

‘You hear,’ said Bothwell, addressing Milnwood; ‘but it’s your own affair;’ and he proffered back the purse with its diminished contents, with an air of indifference.

Milnwood, whose head seemed stunned by the accumulation of his misfortunes, extended his hand mechanically to take the purse.

‘Are ye mad?’ said his housekeeper, in a whisper;

<sup>1</sup> Black-lead pencil.

<sup>2</sup> Tax.

‘tell them to keep it;—they *will* keep it either by fair means or foul, and it’s our only chance to make them quiet.’

‘I canna do it, Ailie—I canna do it,’ said Milnwood, in the bitterness of his heart. ‘I canna part wi’ the siller I hae counted sae often ower to thae blackguards.’

‘Then I maun do it mysell, Milnwood,’ said the house-keeper, ‘or see a’ gang wrang thegither.—My master, sir,’ she said, addressing Bothwell, ‘canna think o’ taking back ony thing at the hand of an honourable gentleman like you; he implores ye to pit up the siller, and be as kind to his nephew as ye can, and be favourable in reporting our dispositions to government, and let us tak nae wrang for the daft speeches of an auld jaud,’ (here she turned fiercely upon Mause, to indulge herself for the effort which it cost her to assume a mild demeanour to the soldiers), ‘a daft auld whig randy<sup>1</sup>, that ne’er was in the house (foul fa’ her) till yesterday afternoon, and that sall ne’er cross the doorstane again an anes I had her out o’t.’

‘Ay, ay,’ whispered Cuddie to his parent, ‘e’en sae! I kend we wad be put to our travels again whene’er ye suld get three words spoken to an end. I was sure that wad be the upshot o’t, mither.’

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817) lived an absolutely quiet and uneventful life. She began *Pride and Prejudice* in 1796 and finished it in 1797, having already sketched *Sense and Sensibility* (which appeared in 1811). The publishers at first refused her books with contempt. *Pride and Prejudice* did not appear till 1813; *Mansfield Park* came in 1814; *Emma* in 1816; *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were published posthumously.

<sup>1</sup> Scold.

## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

## CHAPTER XIX

THE next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr. Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner, with all the observances which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words: 'May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honour of a private audience with her in the course of this morning?'

Before Elizabeth had time for anything but a blush of surprise, Mrs. Bennet instantly answered, 'Oh dear!—Yes—certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy—I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs.' And, gathering her work together, she was hastening away, when Elizabeth called out,

'Dear ma'am, do not go. I beg you will not go. Mr. Collins must excuse me. He can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself.'

'No, no, nonsense, Lizzy. I desire you will stay where you are.' And upon Elizabeth's seeming really, with vexed and embarrassed looks, about to escape, she added, 'Lizzy, I *insist* upon your staying and hearing Mr. Collins.'

Elizabeth would not oppose such an injunction—and a moment's consideration making her also sensible that it would be wisest to get it over as soon and as quietly

as possible, she sat down again, and tried to conceal, by incessant employment, the feelings which were divided between distress and diversion. Mrs. Bennet and Kitty walked off, and as soon as they were gone Mr. Collins began.

‘Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there not been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you, that I have your respected mother’s permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house, I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it would be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did.’

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing, that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him farther, and he continued:—

‘My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier—that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too!) on

this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool, that she said, "Mr. Collins you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry.—Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman for my sake; and for your own, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her." Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favour of matrimony; it remains to be told why my views were directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighbourhood, where I assure you there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being, as I am, to inherit this estate after the death of your honoured father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place—which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you in the most animated language of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and I shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well

aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the 4 per cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married.'

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

'You are too hasty, sir,' she cried. 'You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without farther loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honour of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them.'

'I am not now to learn,' replied Mr. Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, 'that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favour; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long.'

'Upon my word, sir,' cried Elizabeth, 'your hope is rather an extraordinary one after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make you so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation.'

'Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so,'



said Mr. Collins very gravely—‘but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honour of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications.’

‘Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled.’ And rising as she spoke, she would have quitted the room, had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her :

‘When I do myself the honour of speaking to you next on this subject, I shall hope to receive a more favourable answer than you have now given me ; though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character.’

‘Really, Mr. Collins,’ cried Elizabeth with some warmth, ‘you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one.’

‘You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses are merely words of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these:—It does not appear to me that my hand is

unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of De Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favour; and you should take it into farther consideration, that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made to you. Your portion is unhappily so small, that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.'

'I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretension whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed to be sincere. I thank you again and again for the honour you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female, intending to plague you, but as a rational creature, speaking the truth from her heart.'

'You are uniformly charming!' cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; 'and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable.'

To such perseverance in wilful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew; determined that if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner as must be decisive, and whose behaviour

at least could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

**WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY** (1811-1863) was born at Calcutta, and spent the first six years of his life in India. He was educated at Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was called to the Bar, but preferred journalism to the law. He published drawings as well as literary sketches, and helped to edit *The Constitutional*. *The Yellowplush Papers* appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* from 1838 to 1840; *Vanity Fair*, 'with Illustrations by the Author,' was published in monthly numbers beginning in January, 1847; *The Book of Snobs* (reprinted from *Punch*, 1846-7) appeared in 1848; *Pendennis*, 'with Illustrations by the Author,' began in November, 1848; *The History of Samuel Titmarsh and the Great Hoggarty Diamond* (reprinted from *Fraser's Magazine* of 1841) appeared in 1849; *Rebecca and Rowena* (a burlesque continuation of *Ivanhoe*) in 1846; *The Kickleburys on the Rhine* in 1850; *Esmond* in 1852. In 1852 Thackeray lectured in America on *The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*. *The Newcomes* began in October, 1853; *The Rose and the Ring*, 'a Fireside Pantomime for great and small Children, . . . illustrated by the author,' was published for Christmas 1855; *Barry Lyndon* (reprinted from *Fraser's*) in 1844; *The Virginians* (a sequel to *Esmond*) began in November, 1857; *The Four Georges* (reprinted from the *Cornhill Magazine*) in 1861; *The Adventures of Philip* (also reprinted from the *Cornhill*) in 1861; *Roundabout Papers* (from the *Cornhill*), 1864.

## VANITY FAIR

### CHAPTER I

WHILE the present century was in its teens, and on one sunshiny morning in June, there drove up to the great iron gate of Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies, on Chiswick Mall, a large family coach, with two fat horses in blazing harness, driven by a fat coachman in a three-cornered hat and wig, at the rate of four miles an hour. A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton's shining brass

plate, and, as he pulled the bell, at least a score of young heads were seen peering out of the narrow windows of the stately old brick house. Nay, the acute observer might have recognized the little red nose of good-natured Miss Jemima Pinkerton herself, rising over some geranium-pots in the window of that lady's own drawing-room.

'It is Mrs. Sedley's coach, sister,' said Miss Jemima. 'Sambo, the black servant, has just rung the bell; and the coachman has a new red waistcoat.'

'Have you completed all the necessary preparations incident to Miss Sedley's departure, Miss Jemima?' asked Miss Pinkerton herself, that majestic lady—the Semiramis of Hammersmith, the friend of Dr. Johnson, the correspondent of Mrs. Chapone herself.

The girls were up at four this morning, packing her trunks, sister,' replied Miss Jemima; 'we have made her a bow-pot.'

'Say a bouquet, sister Jemima; 'tis more genteel.'

'Well, a booky as big almost as a haystack; I have put up two bottles of the gillyflower-water for Mrs. Sedley, and the receipt for making it, in Amelia's box.'

'And I trust, Miss Jemima, you have made a copy of Miss Sedley's account. This is it, is it? Very good—ninety-three pounds, four shillings. Be kind enough to address it to John Sedley, Esquire, and to seal this billet which I have written to his lady.'

In Miss Jemima's eyes an autograph letter of her sister, Miss Pinkerton, was an object of as deep veneration as would have been a letter from a sovereign. Only when her pupils quitted the establishment, or when they were about to be married, and once, when poor Miss Birch died of the scarlet fever, was Miss Pinkerton known to write personally to the parents of her pupils; and it was Jemima's opinion that if anything *could* console Mrs. Birch

for her daughter's loss it would be that pious and eloquent composition in which Miss Pinkerton announced the event.

In the present instance Miss Pinkerton's 'billet' was to the following effect:—

‘THE MALL, CHISWICK,

June 15, 18—.

‘MADAM,—After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honour and happiness of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents, as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. Those virtues which characterize the young English gentlewoman, those accomplishments which become her birth and station, will not be found wanting in the amiable Miss Sedley, whose *industry* and *obedience* have endeared her to her instructors, and whose delightful sweetness of temper has charmed her *aged* and her *youthful* companions.

‘In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realized her friends' *fondest wishes*. In geography there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the backboard, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified *deportment* and *carriage* so requisite for every young lady of *fashion*.

‘In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy of an establishment which has been honoured by the presence of *The Great Lexicographer*, and the patronage of the admirable Mrs. Chapone.

‘In leaving the Mall, Miss Amelia carries with her the hearts of her companions, and the affectionate regards of her mistress, who has the honour to subscribe herself,

‘Madam,

‘Your most obliged humble servant,

‘BARBARA PINKERTON.’

‘PS.—Miss Sharp accompanies Miss Sedley. It is particularly requested that Miss Sharp’s stay in Russell Square may not exceed ten days. The family of distinction with whom she is engaged desire to avail themselves of her services as soon as possible.’

This letter completed, Miss Pinkerton proceeded to write her own name and Miss Sedley’s in the fly-leaf of a Johnson’s Dictionary—the interesting work which she invariably presented to her scholars on their departure from the Mall. On the cover was inserted a copy of ‘Lines addressed to a young lady on quitting Miss Pinkerton’s school, at the Mall; by the late revered Doctor Samuel Johnson.’ In fact, the Lexicographer’s name was always on the lips of this majestic woman, and a visit he had paid to her was the cause of her reputation and her fortune.

Being commanded by her elder sister to get ‘the Dictionary’ from the cupboard, Miss Jemima had extracted two copies of the book from the receptacle in question. When Miss Pinkerton had finished the inscription in the first, Jemima, with rather a dubious and timid air, handed her the second.

‘For whom is this, Miss Jemima?’ said Miss Pinkerton, with awful coldness.

‘For Becky Sharp,’ answered Jemima, trembling very much, and blushing over her withered face and neck, as she turned her back on her sister—‘for Becky Sharp: she’s going too.’

‘MISS JEMIMA!’ exclaimed Miss Pinkerton, in the largest capitals. ‘Are you in your senses? Replace the Dictionary in the closet, and never venture to take such liberty in future.’

‘Well, sister, it’s only two-and-ninepence, and poor Becky will be miserable if she don’t get one.’

‘Send Miss Sedley instantly to me,’ said Miss Pinkerton. And so venturing not to say another word, poor Jemima trotted off, exceedingly flurried and nervous.

Miss Sedley’s papa was a merchant in London, and a man of some wealth ; whereas Miss Sharp was an articulated pupil, for whom Miss Pinkerton had done, as she thought, quite enough, without conferring upon her at parting the high honour of the Dictionary.

. . . . .

As we are to see a great deal of Amelia, there is no harm in saying at the outset of our acquaintance that she was one of the best and dearest creatures that ever lived ; and a great mercy it is, both in life and in novels, which (and the latter especially) abound in villains of the most sombre sort, that we are to have for a constant companion so guileless and good-natured a person. As she is not a heroine, there is no need to describe her person ; indeed I am afraid that her nose was rather short than otherwise, and her cheeks a great deal too round and red for a heroine, but her face blushed with rosy health, and her lips with the freshest of smiles, and she had a pair of eyes, which sparkled with the brightest and honestest good-humour, except indeed when they filled with tears, and that was a great deal too often ; for the silly thing would cry over a dead canary-bird, or over a mouse, that the cat haply had seized upon, or over the end of a novel, were it ever so stupid ; and as for saying an unkind word to her, were any one hard-hearted enough to do so—why, so much the worse for them. Even Miss Pinkerton, that austere and god-like woman, ceased scolding her after the first time, and though she no more comprehended sensibility than she did Algebra, gave all masters and teachers particular orders to treat Miss Sedley with the utmost gentleness, as harsh treatment was injurious to her.

So that when the day of departure came, between her two customs of laughing and crying, Miss Sedley was greatly puzzled how to act. She was glad to go home, and yet most woefully sad at leaving school. For three days before, Little Laura Martin, the orphan, followed her about like a little dog. She had to make and receive at least fourteen presents, to make fourteen solemn promises of writing every week: 'Send my letters under cover to my grandpapa, the Earl of Dexter,' said Miss Saltire (who, by the way, was rather shabby): 'Never mind the postage, but write every day, you dear darling,' said the impetuous and woolly-headed, but generous and affectionate Miss Swartz; and little Laura Martin (who was just in round hand) took her friend's hand and said, looking up in her face wistfully, 'Amelia, when I write to you I shall call you Mamma.' All which details, I have no doubt, JONES, who reads this book at his Club, will pronounce to be excessively foolish, trivial, twaddling, and ultra-sentimental. Yes; I can see Jones at this minute (rather flushed with his joint of mutton and half-pint of wine), taking out his pencil and scoring under the words 'foolish, twaddling,' etc., and adding to them his own remark of '*quite true.*' Well, he is a lofty man of genius, and admires the great and heroic in life and novels; and so had better take warning and go elsewhere.

Well, then. The flowers, and the presents, and the trunks, and bonnet-boxes of Miss Sedley having been arranged by Mr. Sambo in the carriage, together with a very small and weather-beaten old cow's-skin trunk with Miss Sharp's card neatly nailed upon it, which was delivered by Sambo with a grin, and packed by the coachman with a corresponding sneer—the hour for parting came; and the grief of that moment was considerably lessened by the admirable discourse which Miss Pinkerton



addressed to her pupil. Not that the parting speech caused Amelia to philosophize, or that it armed her in any way with a calmness, the result of argument ; but it was intolerably dull, pompous, and tedious ; and, having the fear of her schoolmistress greatly before her eyes Miss Sedley did not venture, in her presence, to give way to any ebullitions of private grief. A seed-cake and a bottle of wine were produced in the drawing-room, as on the solemn occasions of the visit of parents, and these refreshments being partaken of, Miss Sedley was at liberty to depart.

‘You’ll go in and say good-bye to Miss Pinkerton, Becky?’ said Miss Jemima to a young lady of whom nobody took any notice, and who was coming down stairs with her own band-box.

‘I suppose I must,’ said Miss Sharp calmly, and much to the wonder of Miss Jemima ; and the latter having knocked at the door, and receiving permission to come in, Miss Sharp advanced in a very unconcerned manner, and said in French, and with a perfect accent, ‘*Mademoiselle, je viens vous faire mes adieux.*’

Miss Pinkerton did not understand French ; she only directed those who did : but biting her lips and throwing up her venerable and Roman-nosed head (on the top of which figured a large and solemn turban), she said, ‘Miss Sharp, I wish you a good-morning.’ As the Hammersmith Semiramis spoke, she waved one hand both by way of adieu, and to give Miss Sharp an opportunity of shaking one of the fingers of the hand which was left out for that purpose.

Miss Sharp only folded her own hands with a very frigid smile and bow, and quite declined to accept the proffered honour ; on which Semiramis tossed up her turban more indignantly than ever. In fact, it was

a little battle between the young lady and the old one, and the latter was worsted. 'Heaven bless you, my child,' said she, embracing Amelia, and scowling the while over the girl's shoulder at Miss Sharp.

'Come away, Becky,' said Miss Jemima, pulling the young woman away in great alarm, and the drawing-room door closed upon them for ever.

Then came the struggle and parting below. Words refuse to tell it. All the servants were there in the hall—all the dear friends—all the young ladies—the dancing master who had just arrived; and there was such a scuffling, and hugging, and kissing, and crying, with the hysterical *yoops* of Miss Swartz, the parlour-boarder, from her room, as no pen can depict, and as the tender heart would fain pass over. The embracing was over; they parted—that is, Miss Sedley parted from her friends. Miss Sharp had demurely entered the carriage some minutes before. Nobody cried for leaving *her*.

Sambo of the bandy legs slammed the carriage-door on his young weeping mistress. He sprang up behind the carriage. 'Stop!' cried Miss Jemima, rushing to the gate with a parcel.

'It's some sandwiches, my dear,' said she to Amelia. 'You may be hungry, you know; and Becky, Becky Sharp, here's a book for you that my sister—that is, I—Johnson's Dictionary, you know: you mustn't leave us without that. Good-bye. Drive on, coachman. God bless you!'

And the kind creature retreated into the garden, overcome with emotions.

But, lo! and just as the coach drove off, Miss Sharp put her pale face out of the window, and actually flung the book back into the garden.

This almost caused Jemima to faint with terror.

‘Well, I never,’ said she; ‘what an audacious——’ Emotion prevented her from completing either sentence. The carriage rolled away; the great gates were closed; the bell rang for the dancing lesson. The world is before the two young ladies; and so farewell to Chiswick Mall.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870) was brought up under conditions of some hardship. He received a very intermittent education, and at twelve years old was working in a blacking-factory, while his father was lying in the Marshalsea, imprisoned for debt. Many of the incidents described in his novels, and particularly in *David Copperfield*, are based on his own experiences. The family circumstances improved in 1824, and Charles was sent to school for a few years. On leaving school he became an attorney’s clerk, but soon exchanged this profession for that of newspaper reporter and journalist. In 1836 he published a collection of papers under the title, *Sketches by Boz*. *The Pickwick Papers*, published, like most of his works, in monthly numbers, began to appear in 1836. Four hundred copies were prepared of the first number, and forty thousand of the fifteenth. *Oliver Twist* began in January, 1837; *Nicholas Nickleby* in April, 1838; *Master Humphrey’s Clock* (which afterwards resolved itself into the two novels of *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*) in April, 1840. In 1842 he visited the United States, and on his return published *American Notes*. The first number of *Martin Chuzzlewit* appeared in January, 1843, and *The Christmas Carol* in the latter part of the same year. *The Chimes* appeared in 1844; *The Cricket on the Hearth* in 1845; *Dombey and Son* began in October, 1846; *The Haunted Man* was published 1848; *David Copperfield* began in May, 1849; *Bleak House* in March, 1852; *Hard Times* in April, 1854; *Little Dorrit* in December, 1855; *A Tale of Two Cities* in April, 1859; *Great Expectations* was published 1861; *Our Mutual Friend* began in May, 1864; *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* began in April, 1870, and was unfinished when Dickens died. He also wrote a large number of essays and sketches (among the best known of which are the stories of *Mrs. Lirriper* and *The Uncommercial Traveller*), beside publishing a *Child’s History of England*.

## NICHOLAS NICKLEBY

## CHAPTER XIV

It was the anniversary of that happy day on which the church of England as by law established, had bestowed Mrs. Kenwigs upon Mr. Kenwigs ; and in grateful commemoration of the same, Mrs. Kenwigs had invited a few select friends to cards and a supper in the first floor, and had put on a new gown to receive them in : which gown, being of a flaming colour and made upon a juvenile principle, was so successful that Mr. Kenwigs said the eight years of matrimony and the five children seemed all but a dream, and Mrs. Kenwigs younger and more blooming than on the very first Sunday he had kept company with her.

Beautiful as Mrs. Kenwigs looked when she was dressed though, and so stately that you would have supposed she had a cook and a housemaid at least, and nothing to do but order them about, she had a world of trouble with the preparations ; more, indeed, than she, being of a delicate and genteel constitution, could have sustained, had not the pride of housewifery upheld her. At last, however, all the things that had to be got together were got together, and all the things that had to be got out of the way were got out of the way, and everything was ready, and the collector himself having promised to come, fortune smiled upon the occasion.

The party was admirably selected. There were, first of all, Mr. Kenwigs and Mrs. Kenwigs, and four olive Kenwigses who sat up to supper ; firstly, because it was but right that they should have a treat on such a day ; and secondly, because their going to bed, in presence of the company, would have been inconvenient, not to say improper. Then, there was a young lady who had made Mrs. Kenwigs's dress, and who—it was the most con-

venient thing in the world—living in the two-pair back, gave up her bed to the baby, and got a little girl to watch it. Then, to match this young lady, was a young man, who had known Mr. Kenwigs when he was a bachelor, and was much esteemed by the ladies, as bearing the reputation of a rake. To these, were added a newly-married couple, who had visited Mr. and Mrs. Kenwigs in their courtship; and a sister of Mrs. Kenwigs's, who was quite a beauty; besides whom, there was another young man, supposed to entertain honourable designs upon the lady last mentioned; and Mr. Noggs, who was a genteel person to ask, because he had been a gentleman once. There was also an elderly lady from the back parlour, and one more young lady, who, next to the collector, perhaps was the great lion of the party, being the daughter of a theatrical fireman, who 'went on' in the pantomime, and had the greatest turn for the stage that was ever known, being able to sing and recite in a manner that brought the tears into Mrs. Kenwigs's eyes. There was only one drawback upon the pleasure of seeing such friends, and that was the lady in the back parlour, who was very fat, and turned of sixty, came in a low book-muslin dress and short kid gloves, which so exasperated Mrs. Kenwigs, that that lady assured her visitors, in private, that if it hadn't happened that the supper was cooking at the back-parlour grate at that moment, she certainly would have requested its representative to withdraw.

'My dear,' said Mr. Kenwigs, 'wouldn't it be better to begin a round game?'

'Kenwigs, my dear,' returned his wife, 'I am surprised at you. Would you begin without my uncle?'

'I forgot the collector,' said Kenwigs; 'oh no, that would never do.'

‘He’s so particular,’ said Mrs. Kenwigs, turning to the other married lady, ‘that if we began without him, I should be out of his will for ever.’

‘Dear!’ cried the married lady.

‘You’ve no idea what he is,’ replied Mrs. Kenwigs; ‘and yet as good a creature as ever breathed.’

‘The kindest-hearted man as ever was,’ said Kenwigs.

‘It goes to his heart, I believe, to be forced to cut the water off, when the people don’t pay,’ observed the bachelor friend, intending a joke.

‘George,’ said Mr. Kenwigs, solemnly, ‘none of that, if you please.’

‘It was only my joke,’ said the friend, abashed.

‘George,’ rejoined Mr. Kenwigs, ‘a joke is a very good thing—a very good thing—but when that joke is made at the expense of Mrs. Kenwigs’s feelings, I set my face against it. A man in public life expects to be sneered at—it is the fault of his elevated situation, and not of himself. Mrs. Kenwigs’s relation is a public man, and that he knows, George, and that he can bear: but putting Mrs. Kenwigs out of the question (if I *could* put Mrs. Kenwigs out of the question on such an occasion as this), I have the honour to be connected with the collector by marriage; and I cannot allow these remarks in my—’ Mr. Kenwigs was going to say ‘house’, but he rounded the sentence with ‘apartments’.

At the conclusion of these observations, which drew forth evidences of acute feeling from Mrs. Kenwigs, and had the intended effect of impressing the company with a deep sense of the collector’s dignity, a ring was heard at the bell.

‘That’s him,’ whispered Mr. Kenwigs, greatly excited. ‘Morleena, my dear, run down and let your uncle in, and

kiss him directly you get the door open. Hem! Let's be talking.'

. . . . .

'Oh uncle, I am so glad to see you,' said Mrs. Kenwigs, kissing the collector affectionately on both cheeks. 'So glad!'

'Many happy returns of the day, my dear,' replied the collector, returning the compliment.

. . . . .

'Where will you sit, uncle?' said Mrs. Kenwigs, in the full glow of family pride, which the appearance of her distinguished relation occasioned.

'Anywheres, my dear,' said the collector, 'I am not particular.'

Not particular! What a meek collector. If he had been an author, who knew his place, he couldn't have been more humble.

'Mr. Lillyvick,' said Kenwigs, addressing the collector, 'some friends here, sir, are very anxious for the honour of—thank you—Mr. and Mrs. Cutler, Mr. Lillyvick.'

'Proud to know you, sir,' said Mr. Cutler, 'I've heerd of you very often.' These were not mere words of ceremony; for, Mr. Cutler, having kept house in Mr. Lillyvick's parish, had heard of him very often indeed. His attention in calling had been quite extraordinary.

'George, you know, I think, Mr. Lillyvick,' said Kenwigs; 'lady from downstairs—Mr. Lillyvick. Mr. Snewkes—Mr. Lillyvick. Miss Green—Mr. Lillyvick. Mr. Lillyvick—Miss Petowker of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Very glad to make two public characters acquainted! Mrs. Kenwigs, my dear, will you sort the counters?'

Mrs. Kenwigs, with the assistance of Newman Noggs

(who, as he performed sundry little acts of kindness for the children, at all times and seasons, was humoured in his request to be taken no notice of, and was merely spoken about, in a whisper, as the decayed gentleman), did as she was desired ; and the greater part of the guests sat down to speculation, while Newman himself, Mrs. Kenwigs, and Miss Petowker of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, looked after the supper-table.

While the ladies were thus busying themselves, Mr. Lillyvick was intent upon the game in progress, and as all should be fish that comes to a water-collector's net, the dear old gentleman was by no means scrupulous in appropriating to himself the property of his neighbours, which, on the contrary, he abstracted whenever an opportunity presented itself, smiling good-humouredly all the while, and making so many condescending speeches to the owners, that they were delighted with his amiability, and thought in their hearts that he deserved to be Chancellor of the Exchequer at least.

After a great deal of trouble, and the administration of many slaps on the head to the infant Kenwigses, whereof two of the most rebellious were summarily banished, the cloth was laid with much elegance, and a pair of boiled fowls, a large piece of pork, apple-pie, potatoes, and greens, were served ; at sight of which, the worthy Mr. Lillyvick vented a great many witticisms, and plucked up amazingly : to the immense delight and satisfaction of the whole body of admirers.

Very well and very fast the supper went off ; no more serious difficulties occurring than those which arose from the incessant demand for clean knives and forks : which made poor Mrs. Kenwigs wish, more than once, that private society adopted the principle of schools and required that every guest should bring his own knife,



fork, and spoon; which doubtless would be a great accommodation in many cases, and to no one more so than to the lady and gentleman of the house, especially if the school principle were carried out to the full extent; and the articles were expected, as a matter of delicacy, not to be taken away again.

Everybody had eaten everything, the table was cleared in a most alarming hurry, and with great noise; and the spirits, whereat the eyes of Newman Noggs glistened, being arranged in order, with water both hot and cold, the party composed themselves for conviviality; Mr. Lillyvick being stationed in a large arm-chair by the fire-side, and the four little Kenwigses disposed on a small form in front of the company with their flaxen tails towards them, and their faces to the fire; an arrangement which was no sooner perfected, than Mrs. Kenwigs was overpowered by the feelings of a mother, and fell upon the left shoulder of Mr. Kenwigs dissolved in tears.

‘They are so beautiful!’ said Mrs. Kenwigs, sobbing.

‘Oh, dear,’ said all the ladies, ‘so they are! it’s very natural you should feel proud of that; but don’t give way, don’t.’

‘I can—not help it, and it don’t signify,’ sobbed Mrs. Kenwigs; ‘oh! they’re too beautiful to live, much too beautiful!’

On hearing this alarming presentiment of their being doomed to an early death in the flower of their infancy, all four little girls raised a hideous cry, and burying their heads in their mother’s lap simultaneously, screamed until the eight flaxen tails vibrated again; Mrs. Kenwigs meanwhile clasping them alternately to her bosom, with the attitudes expressive of distraction, which Miss Petowker herself might have copied.

At length, the anxious mother permitted herself to be

soothed into a more tranquil state, and the little Kenwigses, being also composed, were distributed among the company, to prevent the possibility of Mrs. Kenwigs being again overcome by the blaze of their combined beauty. This done, the ladies and gentlemen united in prophesying that they would live for many, many years, and that there was no occasion at all for Mrs. Kenwigs to distress herself: which, in good truth, there did not appear to be; the loveliness of the children by no means justifying her apprehensions.

‘This day eight year,’ said Mr. Kenwigs after a pause.

‘Dear me—ah!’

This reflection was echoed by all present, who said ‘Ah!’ first, and ‘dear me,’ afterwards.

‘I was younger then,’ tittered Mrs. Kenwigs.

‘No,’ said the collector.

‘Certainly not,’ added everybody.

‘I remember my niece,’ said Mr. Lillyvick, surveying his audience with a grave air; ‘I remember her, on that very afternoon, when she first acknowledged to her mother a partiality for Kenwigs. “Mother,” she says, “I love him.”’

“Adore him,” I said, uncle,’ interposed Mrs. Kenwigs.

“Love him,” I think, my dear,’ said the collector, firmly.

‘Perhaps you are right, uncle,’ replied Mrs. Kenwigs, submissively. ‘I thought it was “adore.”’

“Love,” my dear,’ retorted Mr. Lillyvick. “Mother,” she says, “I love him!” “What do I hear?” cries her mother; and instantly falls into strong convulsions.’

A general exclamation of astonishment burst from the company.

‘Into strong convulsions,’ repeated Mr. Lillyvich, regarding them with a rigid look. ‘Kenwigs will excuse

my saying, in the presence of friends, that there was a very great objection to him, on the ground that he was beneath the family, and would disgrace it. You remember, Kenwigs ?'

'Certainly,' replied that gentleman, in no way displeased at the reminiscence, inasmuch as it proved, beyond all doubt, what a high family Mrs. Kenwigs came of.

'I shared in that feeling,' said Mr. Lillyvick: 'perhaps it was natural ; perhaps it wasn't.'

A gentle murmur seemed to say, that, in one of Mr. Lillyvick's station, the objection was not only natural, but highly praiseworthy.

'I came round to him in time,' said Mr. Lillyvick. 'After they were married, and there was no help for it, I was one of the first to say that Kenwigs must be taken notice of. The family *did* take notice of him, in consequence, and on my representation ; and I am bound to say—and proud to say—that I have always found him a very honest, well-behaved, upright, respectable sort of man. Kenwigs, shake hands.'

'I am proud to do it, sir,' said Mr. Kenwigs.

'So am I, Kenwigs,' rejoined Mr. Lillyvick.

'A very happy life I have led with your niece, sir,' said Kenwigs.

'It would have been your own fault if you had not, sir,' remarked Mr. Lillyvick.

'Morleena Kenwigs,' cried her mother, at this crisis, much affected, 'kiss your dear uncle !'

The young lady did as she was requested, and the three other little girls were successively hoisted up to the collector's countenance, and subjected to the same process, which was afterwards repeated on them by the majority of those present.

'Oh dear, Mrs. Kenwigs,' said Miss Petowker, 'while Mr. Noggs is making that punch to drink happy returns in, do let Morleena go through that figure dance before Mr. Lillyvick.'

'No, no, my dear,' replied Mrs. Kenwigs, 'it will only worry my uncle.'

'It can't worry him, I am sure,' said Miss Petowker. 'You will be very much pleased, won't you, sir?'

'That I am sure I shall,' replied the collector, glancing at the punch-mixer.

'Well then, I'll tell you what,' said Mrs. Kenwigs, 'Morleena shall do the steps, if uncle can persuade Miss Petowker to recite us the Blood-Drinker's Burial afterwards.'

There was a great clapping of hands and stamping of feet, at this proposition; the subject whereof, gently inclined her head several times, in acknowledgement of the reception.

'You know,' said Miss Petowker, reproachfully, 'that I dislike doing anything professional in private parties.'

'Oh, but not here!' said Mrs. Kenwigs. 'We are all so very friendly and pleasant, that you might as well be going through it in your own room; besides, the occasion——'

'I can't resist that,' interrupted Miss Petowker; 'anything in my humble power I shall be delighted to do.'

Mrs. Kenwigs and Miss Petowker had arranged a small *programme* of the entertainments between them, of which this was the prescribed order, but they had settled to have a little pressing on both sides, because it looked more natural. The company being all ready, Miss Petowker hummed a tune, and Morleena danced a dance; having previously had the soles of her shoes chalked, with as much care as if she were going on the tight-rope. It was

a very beautiful figure, comprising a great deal of work for the arms, and was received with unbounded applause.

. . . . .

Miss Petowker was entreated to begin the Blood-Drinker's Burial; to which end, that young lady let down her back hair, and taking up her position at the other end of the room, with the bachelor friend posted in a corner, to rush out at the cue 'in death expire', and catch her in his arms when she died raving mad, went through the performance with extraordinary spirit, and to the great terror of the little Kenwigses, who were all but frightened into fits.

The ecstasies consequent upon the effort had not yet subsided, and Newman (who had not been thoroughly sober at so late an hour for a long long time,) had not yet been able to put in a word of announcement, that the punch was ready, when a hasty knock was heard at the room-door, which elicited a shriek from Mrs. Kenwigs, who immediately divined that the baby had fallen out of bed.

'Who is that?' demanded Mr. Kenwigs, sharply.

'Don't be alarmed, it's only me,' said Crowl, looking in, in his night-cap. 'The baby is very comfortable, for I peeped into the room as I came down, and it's fast asleep, and so is the girl; and I don't think the candle will set fire to the bed-curtain, unless a draught was to get into the room—it's Mr. Noggs that's wanted.'

'Me!' cried Newman, much astonished.

'Why it is a queer hour, isn't it?' replied Crowl, who was not best pleased at the prospect of losing his fire; 'and they are queer-looking people, too, all covered with rain and mud. Shall I tell them to go away?'

'No,' said Newman, rising. 'People? How many?'

‘Two,’ rejoined Crawl.

‘Want me? By name?’ asked Newman.

‘By name,’ replied Crawl. ‘Mr. Newman Noggs, as pat as need be.’

Newman reflected for a few seconds, and then hurried away, muttering that he would be back directly. He was as good as his word; for, in an exceedingly short time, he burst into the room, and seizing, without a word of apology or explanation, a lighted candle and tumbler of hot punch from the table, darted away like a madman.

‘What the deuce is the matter with him?’ exclaimed Crawl, throwing the door open. ‘Hark! is there any noise above?’

The guests rose in great confusion, and, looking in each other’s faces with much perplexity and some fear, stretched their necks forward, and listened attentively.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ESSAYISTS, CRITICS, AND MORALISTS

THE nineteenth century in England was essentially a period of conflicts and discoveries. Religion awoke in the Oxford Movement; political change saw the Catholic Emancipation Bill and the abolition of the Corn Laws; science rewrote the pedigree of the human race and enriched us with resources which in 1800 would have seemed miraculous; criticism began by refusing to understand *Christabel*, and ended by admitting that it understood *Sordello*. It was natural that in such a period a large part of our literature should express itself in essay and treatise: Newman's *Tracts for the Times* and Darwin's *Origin of Species*; the fine taste of Lamb and the urbanity of Matthew Arnold; Macaulay, confident and incisive; Hazlitt, as clear as crystal and as keen of edge, the marble dialogues of Landor, the rich eloquence of Ruskin, the whirlwinds and tempests of Carlyle. Every new stage of advance meant a cause to defend or a warning to deliver: the discussions and controversies which filled the world gave every man his opportunity of maintaining a principle or attacking an heretical belief.

Hazlitt always speaks from the Professor's chair. He does not argue with us; he tells us. Now and again he will lighten his lecture with an epigram or an anecdote or a piece of autobiography: but for the most part he is occupied in giving judgements, forcible and admirably delivered, on the topic of the hour's discourse. His style is at all times excellent: 'we are mighty fine fellows,' says R. L. Stevenson,

'but we cannot write like Hazlitt.' Every word falls in just and measured cadence: the most challenging invective, not less than the most indisputable affirmation, is expressed with the firm assurance of the instructor who knows.

In the school where Hazlitt wielded the ferule Lamb was the most lovable and wayward scholar. He does not attempt to convince, he is at the farthest extreme from dogmatism; he treats us as comrades, and pours out his heart in complete and unreserved intimacy. There is no difference of kind between his essays and his letters: both alike make the reader a recipient of his confidence and a sharer of his inmost thought. He starts the game and we run it down together: the chase is ours in common, but his is the winning shot. Add to this a style founded no doubt on his seventeenth-century reading, but nevertheless delightfully his own; add a fancy as delicate and freakish as Ariel; add a deep reverence for holy things and a warm human sympathy from which nothing is alien, and it is easy to understand the hold that he has on our affections. 'I have none to call me Charley now,' he wrote, on the death of a near friend. There is not one of us who would not call him Charley if we might.

Landor stands aloof and unapproachable: an old lion from whose cave there are no backward steps. We never come on personal terms with him: the wonderful lyric on Rose Aylmer makes us hold back as from a sorrow on which we fear to intrude. He is the counterpart and antithesis of Peacock: both scholarly, both artificial, but the one using scholarship like a graver's tool and holding artifice before him as a screen, the other whimsical and humorous, making fun of the Classics as he made fun of Byron or Lord Monboddo. With Landor we feel that we are in the presence of a great man, but we do not know how to address him; we are not at our ease,



we are not sure of our welcome. We make our *congé* and retire, feeling that we have been honoured by the audience, but a little relieved that it has come to an end. At the same time there is no denying his pre-eminence. When his contemporaries disregarded him, 'I shall dine late,' he said, and it is in our time that his hour has struck.

Macaulay, on the other hand, is the most affable of potentates. He reasons, he discusses, he forces conviction, he overwhelms us with the extent of his knowledge and with the brilliance of his analogies. He 'speaks to us as if we were a public meeting': not condescending to our weakness, but determined at all hazards to sway our judgement. Matthew Arnold, in a splenetic phrase, described his style as 'the constant appearance of hitting the nail on the head without the reality': and there can be no doubt that when he is manifestly wrong, as in the case of William Penn, or Marlborough, or the Glencoe Massacres, he can make as effective a speech as when he has the whole of truth and reason on his side. But if he has the advocate's weakness, he has also the advocate's strength. No man before him has made history so vivid; no man has had so happy a knack of telling phrase and apposite illustration. His errors may be left to the annalist: to the student of letters his prose style (his ballads are the poems of a prose writer) will always remain as an example of terse and picturesque description.

Carlyle and Ruskin are both moralists, of whom the one has chosen the political avenue towards ethics and the other the artistic. Each in his way is a master of his own method. Carlyle describes history in an epic and discusses it in a system of philosophy; Ruskin looks upon art with a keen though limited vision, and shows us certain aspects of beauty which, in his time, criticism had con-

tentedly disregarded. Above all, in matters of conduct both are preachers to whom we may profitably listen. Both are idealists, calling us from the temptations of indolence and pleasure and material advantage, and turning our eyes to the blessing of work, to the majesty of truth, to the eternal splendour which shines behind the veil of sense. Both men are profoundly dissatisfied with the present age. Ruskin is as stern in rebuke as a Hebrew prophet; Carlyle storms at us with nicknames and invectives, which we take meekly, knowing that they are animated by a sincere wish for our amendment. In neither is there a touch of pessimism: each believes with his whole heart that right shall prevail, and by very force of belief has done much to ensure its victory.

It will be observed that in our nineteenth-century prose there is no longer any idea of a 'Classical' style: a typical standard of literary elegance and refinement. No two of the authors here cited treat English prose from the same standpoint: they are personal, individual, not bound to swear allegiance to any master. And the same holds good of their contemporaries. The stately periods of de Quincey, the easy colloquialisms of Leigh Hunt, the solidity of Godwin, the flamboyance of Disraeli, all claim an equal measure of liberty and independence. The maxim '*le style c'est l'homme*' is no doubt true in all ages and in all nations: its truth is especially apparent in this most democratic period of our literature.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778-1830), the 'W. H.' of Lamb's essays, was at first intended for the Unitarian Ministry, and afterwards spent some time in studying art. He painted several portraits, including an unsuccessful one of Wordsworth, and one of Lamb as a Venetian senator, which is now in the National Portrait Gallery. He was always deeply interested in philosophy and literature, and fell very much under the influence of Coleridge.

In 1808 he married, and settled for a time at Winterslow, a village near Salisbury, which later gave the title to one of his volumes of essays (1839). Shortly after he took up journalism, and became parliamentary reporter for *The Morning Chronicle*. In 1815 Leigh Hunt suggested that he and Hazlitt should write a series of papers for *The Examiner*. These papers continued till 1817, and were afterwards published as *The Round Table*; by far the greater number were written by Hazlitt. In 1817 appeared his *Characters of Shakespeare*; in 1818, *The English Poets*; in 1819, *English Comic Writers*; in 1821, *Dramatic Literature of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, all of which were first delivered as lectures. In 1825 came *The Spirit of the Age*; or *Contemporary Portraits*; in 1826, *The Plain Speaker*; in 1830, *Conversations of James Northcote, Esq., R.A.* He also produced a number of philosophical works, a few essays on art, and a mass of miscellaneous essays and articles.

## WORDSWORTH

(From *The Spirit of the Age*.)

BUT to the author of the *Lyrical Ballads* nature is a kind of home; and he may be said to take a personal interest in the universe. There is no image so insignificant that it has not in some mood or other found the way into his heart: no sound that does not awaken the memory of other years.—

To him the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The daisy looks up to him with sparkling eye as an old acquaintance: the cuckoo haunts him with sounds of early youth not to be expressed: a linnet's nest startles him with boyish delight: an old withered thorn is weighed down with a heap of recollections: a grey cloak, seen on some wild moor, torn by the wind or drenched in the rain, afterwards becomes an object of imagination to him: even the lichens on the rock have a life and being in his thoughts. He has described all these objects in

a way and with an intensity of feeling that no one else had done before him, and has given a new view or aspect of nature. He is in this sense the most original poet now living, and the one whose writings could the least be spared: for they have no substitute elsewhere. The vulgar do not read them; the learned, who see all things through books, do not understand them; the great despise. The fashionable may ridicule them: but the author has created himself an interest in the heart of the retired and lonely student of nature, which can never die.

Persons of this class will still continue to feel what he has felt: he has expressed what they might in vain wish to express, except with glistening eye and faltering tongue! There is a lofty philosophic tone, a thoughtful humanity, infused into his pastoral vein. Remote from the passions and events of the great world, he has communicated interest and dignity to the primal movements of the heart of man, and ingrafted his own conscious reflections on the casual thoughts of hinds and shepherds. Nursed amidst the grandeur of mountain scenery, he has stooped to have a nearer view of the daisy under his feet, or plucked a branch of white-thorn from the spray: but, in describing it, his mind seems imbued with the majesty and solemnity of the objects around him. The tall rock lifts its head in the erectness of his spirit; the cataract roars in the sound of his verse; and in its dim and mysterious meaning the mists seem to gather in the hollows of Helvellyn, and the forked Skiddaw hovers in the distance. There is little mention of mountainous scenery in Mr. Wordsworth's poetry; but by internal evidence one might be almost sure that it was written in a mountainous country, from its bareness, its simplicity, its loftiness and its depth!

His later philosophic productions have a somewhat different character. They are a departure from, a dereliction of, his first principles. They are classical and courtly. They are polished in style without being gaudy, dignified in subject without affectation. They seem to have been composed not in a cottage at Grasmere, but among the half-inspired groves and stately recollections of Cole-Orton. We might allude in particular, for examples of what we mean, to the lines on a Picture by Claude Lorraine and to the exquisite poem, entitled *Laodamia*. The last of these breathes the pure spirit of the finest fragments of antiquity—the sweetness, the gravity, the strength, the beauty and the languor of death—

Calm contemplation and majestic pains.

Its glossy brilliancy arises from the perfection of the finishing, like that of a careful sculpture, not from gaudy colouring. The texture of the thoughts has the smoothness and solidity of marble. It is a poem that might be read aloud in Elysium, and the spirits of departed heroes and sages would gather round to listen to it!

Mr. Wordsworth's philosophic poetry, with a less glowing aspect and less tumult in the veins than Lord Byron's on similar occasions, bends a calmer and keener eye on mortality; the impression, if less vivid, is more pleasing and permanent; and we confess it (perhaps it is a want of taste and proper feeling) that there are lines and poems of our author's that we think of ten times for once that we recur to any of Lord Byron's. Or if there are any of the latter's writings that we can dwell upon in the same way, that is, as lasting and heartfelt sentiments, it is when, laying aside his usual pomp and pretension, he descends with Mr. Wordsworth to the common ground of a disinterested humanity. It may be

considered as characteristic of our poet's writings, that they either make no impression on the mind at all, seem mere *nonsense-verses*, or that they leave a mark behind them that never wears out. They either

Fall blunted from the indurated breast—

without any perceptible result, or they absorb it like a passion. To one class of readers he appears sublime, to another (and we fear the largest) ridiculous. He has probably realized Milton's wish,—‘and fit audience found, though few’: but we suspect he is not reconciled to the alternative.

CHARLES LAMB (1775-1834) spent thirty-three years as a clerk in the East India House. There was insanity in the family: Charles himself was at one time confined in a madhouse, and his sister Mary—with whom he lived and worked—was subject to periodic attacks. The story of his life is told with great beauty and simplicity in his letters. Lamb's literary work was done at odd moments, and often in the early hours of the morning. His first appearance in print was made in 1796, when four sonnets of his were included in a volume of ‘*Poems on Various Subjects*, by S. T. Coleridge’. He contributed to the *Morning Post*, *Morning Chronicle*, and *Albion*. In 1802 he published a drama, *John Woodvil*, and in 1805 his farce, *Mr. H.*, was produced at Drury Lane. In 1807 he and his sister published *Mrs. Leicester's School* and *Tales from Shakespeare*. He first took the name of ‘Elia’ when writing for the *London Magazine*, which was started in 1820. The essays appeared in book form in 1823. A few of his verses were reprinted in the edition of his *Collected Works*, published 1818. The most important essays not included in the ‘Elia’ series are those on Hogarth and on the tragedies of Shakespeare, which appeared in Leigh Hunt's paper, *The Reflector*, in 1811.

### A QUAKERS' MEETING

READER, wouldst thou know what true peace and quiet mean; wouldst thou find a refuge from the noises and

clamours of the multitude ; wouldst thou enjoy at once solitude and society ; wouldst thou possess the depth of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species ; wouldst thou be alone and yet accompanied ; solitary, yet not desolate ; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance ; a unit in aggregate ; a simple in composite :—come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence deep as that 'before the winds were made' ? go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth ; shut not up thy casements ; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faith'd self-mistrusting Ulysses.—Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable ; but for a multitude it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert compared with this place ? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes ?—here the goddess reigns and revels.—'Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud,' do not with their interconfounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds—than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers, and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less ; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting.—Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into

Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by—say, a wife—he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another without interruption, or oral communication?—can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words?—away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmerman, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken ;

Or under hanging mountains,  
Or by the fall of fountains ;

is but a vulgar luxury compared with that which those enjoy who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness 'to be felt'.—The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions.

——Sands, ignoble things,  
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings—

but here is something which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground — SILENCE — eldest of things — language of old Night—primitive discourser—to which the insolent decays of mouldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression.

How reverend is the view of these hushed heads,  
Looking tranquillity!



Nothing - plotting, nought - caballing, unmischievous synod! convocation without intrigue! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory!—if my pen treat of you lightly—as haply it will wander—yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when, sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury.—I have witnessed that which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you—for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the outcast and offscouring of church and presbytery.—I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remember Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and ‘the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet’.

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel’s *History of the Quakers*. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox and the primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a byword in your mouth)—James Naylor: what dreadful

sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still!—so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the writings of John Woolman<sup>1</sup> by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies upon which the dove sate visibly brooding. Others, again, I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings.—If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not in their preaching. It is seldom, indeed, that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling, female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard—you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds—with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which ‘she thought might suit the

<sup>1</sup> 1720–72. One of the best known of the American Quakers.

condition of some present', with a quaking diffidence, which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty.—The men, for what I have observed, speak seldomer.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced 'from head to foot equipt in iron mail'. His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit—I dare not say of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable—he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail—his joints all seemed loosening—it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching—the words he uttered were few, and sound—he was evidently resisting his will—keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort than the world's orators strain for theirs. 'He had been a wit in his youth,' he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession—understanding the term in its worldly acceptation—with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levites—the Jocos Risus-que—faster than the Loves fled the face of Dis at Enna.—By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius; or

as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness.—Oh, when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is to go and seat yourself for a quiet half-hour upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined present a uniformity, tranquil and herd-like—as in the pasture—‘forty feeding like one.’

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775–1864) was early noted for the violence of his opinions, and was known at Oxford as the ‘mad Jacobin’. He fired a gun at the window of a Tory undergraduate who was entertaining a party of friends, and was rusticated in consequence. The affair led to a violent quarrel with his father, and Landor left home, as he said, ‘for ever.’ Matters were smoothed over by friends, Landor received an allowance of £150 a year, and devoted himself to literature. *Gebir*, his chief poem, was published in 1798, and was highly praised by Southey and Coleridge. With Southey, Landor afterwards struck up a warm friendship. In 1808 he joined the Spaniards in their struggle against Napoleon, but his readiness to take offence made him of little use as an officer. *Count Julian*, which was inspired by the Spanish campaign, was published in 1811. In 1815, after an interval spent at Llanthony Abbey, in Monmouthshire, he settled in Italy, and it was at Florence that he produced his greatest work, the *Imaginary Conversations*. Six volumes of these were published, suc-

cessively. *Shakespeare's Examination for Deer-stealing* and *Pericles and Aspasia* formed two separate volumes. The latter proved so unsuccessful that Landor returned to the publishers the £100 which they paid for it. *The Pentameron* appeared in 1837, and was followed by three plays, *Andrea of Hungary*, *Giovanni of Naples*, and *Fra Rupert*. In addition to his English works, he wrote a considerable quantity of Latin verse.

## PERICLES AND ASPASIA

### I. ASPASIA TO CLEONE

CLEONE ! I write from Athens. I hasten to meet your reproaches, and to stifle them in my embrace. It was wrong to have left Miletus at all : it was wrong to have parted from you without entrusting you with my secret. No, no, neither was wrong. I have withstood many tears, my sweet Cleone, but never yours ; you could always do what you would with me ; and I should have been windbound by you on the Maeander<sup>1</sup>, as surely and inexorably as the fleet at Aulis by Diana.<sup>2</sup>

Ionia is far more beautiful than Attica, Miletus than Athens ; for about Athens there is no verdure, no spacious and full and flowing river, few gardens, many olive-trees, so many indeed that we seem to be in an eternal cloud of dust. However, when the sea-breezes blow, this tree itself looks beautiful ; it looks, in its pliable and undulating branches, irresolute as Ariadne<sup>3</sup> when she was urged to fly, and pale as Orithyia<sup>4</sup> when she was borne away.

### VII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE

The boy about whom I wrote to you in my letter of yesterday, is called Alcibiades. He lisps and blushes at it. His cousin Pericles, you may have heard, enjoys the

<sup>1</sup> A river near Miletus.

<sup>2</sup> On the expedition to Troy.

<sup>3</sup> See the story of Theseus.

<sup>4</sup> Daughter of Erechtheus, carried off by Boreas.

greatest power and reputation, both as an orator and a general, of any man in Athens. Early this morning the beautiful child came to visit me, and told me that when his cousin had finished his studies, which he usually had done about three hours after sunrise, he would desire him to come also.

I replied, 'By no means do it, my beautiful and brave protector! Surely, on considering the matter, you will think you are taking too great a liberty with a person so distinguished.'

'I take no liberties with any other,' said he.

When I expressed in my countenance a little surprise at his impetuosity, he came forward and kissed my brow. Then said he, more submissively, 'Pardon my rudeness. I like very well to be told what to do by those who are fond of me; but never to be told what not to do; and the more fond they are of me the less I like it. Because when they tell me what to do, they give me an opportunity of pleasing them; but when they tell me what not to do, it is a sign that I have displeased, or am likely to displease them. Beside . . . I believe there are some other reasons, but they have quite escaped me.

'It is time I should return,' said he, 'or I shall forget all about the hour of his studies (I mean Pericles) and mine too.'

I would not let him go however, but inquired who were his teachers, and repeated to him many things from Sappho and Alcaeus and Pindar and Simonides.<sup>1</sup> He was amazed, and told me he preferred them to Fate and Necessity, Pytho and Pythonissa.<sup>2</sup>

I would now have kissed him in my turn, but he drew back, thinking (no doubt) that I was treating him like a

<sup>1</sup> Four famous lyric poets of Greece.

<sup>2</sup> Priest and priestess of Apollo at Delphi.

child ; that a kiss is never given but as the price of pardon ; and that I had pardoned him before for his captiousness.

LXXX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE

How can I ever hope to show you, in all its brightness, the character of my friend ? I will tell you how ; by following Love and Truth. Like most others who have no genius, I do not feel the want of it, at least not here.

A shallow water may reflect the sun as perfectly as a deeper.

The words of Anaxagoras<sup>1</sup> stuck to me like thistles. I resolved to speak in playfulness with the object of our conversation. First I began to hint at enemies. He smiled.

‘The children in my orchard,’ said he, ‘are not yet grown tall enough to reach the fruit ; they may throw at it, but can bring none down.’

‘Do tell me, O Pericles !’ said I, ‘now we are inseparable for ever, how many struggles with yourself (to say nothing of others) you must have had, before you attained the position you have taken.’

‘It is pleasanter,’ answered he, ‘to think of our glory than of the means by which we acquired it.

‘When we see the horses that have won at the Olympian games, do we ask what oats they have eaten to give them such velocity and strength ? Do those who swim admirably ever trouble their minds about the bladders they swam upon in learning, or inquire what beasts supplied them ? When the winds are filling our sails, do we lower them and delay our voyage, in order to philosophize on the particles of air composing them, or to speculate what region produced them or what becomes of them afterward ?’

THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY (1800-1859), early distinguished himself both in literature and politics. In 1825 he was invited to write for the *Edinburgh Review*, and became

‘Of Clazomenae : philosopher and friend of Pericles.

a regular contributor. In 1830 he was offered a seat in Parliament, and soon became prominent as a speaker. In 1833 he was given a seat on the Supreme Council of India, and spent over three years in the East. He began his *History of England* in 1839, and also contributed several more articles to the *Edinburgh*. In the same year he was made Secretary of War. *The Lays of Ancient Rome* appeared in 1842. In 1843 his essays were collected and published. In 1847 he stood for Edinburgh and was defeated. After this he withdrew more and more from public life. The first two volumes of the *History* appeared in 1848, the third and fourth in 1855, and the fifth after his death. He was offered a peerage by Lord Palmerston in 1857, and took the title of Baron Macaulay of Rothley.

### ESSAY ON CLIVE

THE battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable waggons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors.



With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of near sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But, as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and, when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next morning he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honours due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his councillors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived; and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers and three hundred sepoys. For his residence had been assigned a palace, which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Meer Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new Nabob to the seat of honour, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to the natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter ; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and with the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian language. He is said indeed to have been sometimes under the necessity of employing, in his intercourse with natives of India, the smattering of Portuguese which he had acquired, when a lad, in Brazil.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favour of Clive, who, with dissimulation surpassing even the dissimulation of Bengal, had up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the Company, and said in English, 'It is now time to undeceive Omichund.' 'Omichund,' said Mr. Scrafton

in Hindostanee, 'the red treaty is a trick. You are to have nothing.' Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived ; but his mind was irreparably ruined. Clive, who, though little troubled by scruples of conscience in his dealings with Indian politicians, was not inhuman, seems to have been touched. He saw Omichund a few days later, spoke to him kindly, advised him to make a pilgrimage to one of the great temples of India, in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, again to employ him in the public service. But from the moment of that sudden shock, the unhappy man sank gradually into idiocy. He who had formerly been distinguished by the strength of his understanding and the simplicity of his habits, now squandered the remains of his fortune on childish trinkets, and loved to exhibit himself dressed in rich garments, and hung with precious stones. In this abject state he languished a few months, and then died.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881) was the son of a Scotch mason. His father intended him for the Ministry, and in 1809 Thomas walked the 100 miles from his home to Edinburgh in order to enter the University. Before long he decided to abandon all thought of the Ministry, and read for the Bar, supporting himself meanwhile as a tutor in mathematics. In 1823-4 his *Life of Schiller* appeared in the *London Magazine*, and an Edinburgh publisher accepted his translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*. He wrote for various magazines during the next few years. *Sartor Resartus*, after being more than once refused by publishers, began to appear in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1833, and, as the editor reported, 'excited the most unqualified disapprobation.' In 1834 he settled at Chelsea, and remained there for the rest of his life. In the same year he began to work at his history of the *French Revolution*. He sent the first volume when finished to J. S. Mill. The manuscript was acci-

dentally destroyed, and Carlyle's sole comment to his wife was that they must try to conceal from Mill the full extent of the loss. The complete work was published in 1837. In 1841 he published a course of lectures on *Hero-worship*, which was followed in 1843 by *Past and Present*. His *Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell* appeared in 1845, *Latterday Pamphlets* in 1850, *Friedrich II* from 1858 to 1865. He also published a vast mass of miscellaneous writings, critical, historical, and political; among the most famous of these are his criticisms of Scott and Burns, and the *Life of Sterling*.

## SPACE AND TIME

(From *Sartor Resartus*)

THAT the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practises on us.

Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand anti-magician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy<sup>1</sup>, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sand-stone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch* (now a huge Troglodyte<sup>2</sup> Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar<sup>3</sup> houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilizing Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy

<sup>1</sup> Miracle.<sup>2</sup> Cavernous.<sup>3</sup> Square-hewn stone.

of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? Oh, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

## ABBOT SAMSON

(From *Past and Present*)

WE said withal there was a terrible flash of anger in him: witness his address to old Herbert the Dean, who in a too thrifty manner has erected a windmill for himself on his glebe-lands at Haberdon. On the morrow, after Mass, our Lord Abbot orders the Cellerarius to send off his carpenters to demolish the said structure *brevi manu*, and lay up the wood in safe keeping. Old Dean Herbert, hearing what was toward, comes tottering along hither, to plead humbly for himself and his mill. The Abbot answers: 'I am obliged to thee as if thou hadst cut off both my feet! By God's face, *per os Dei*, I will not eat bread till that fabric be torn in pieces. Thou art an old man, and shouldst have known that neither the King nor his Justiciary dare change aught within the Liberties without consent of Abbot and Convent: and thou hast presumed on such a thing? I tell thee, it will not be without damage to my mills; for the Townsfolk will go to thy mill, and grind their corn (*bladum suum*) at their own good pleasure; nor can I hinder them, since

they are free men. I will allow no new mills on such principle. Away, away ; before thou gettest home again, thou shalt see what thy mill has grown to !'—The very reverend the old Dean totters home again, in all haste ; tears the mill in pieces by his own *carpentarii*, to save at least the timber ; and Abbot Samson's workmen, coming up, find the ground already clear of it.

Easy to bully-down poor old rural Deans, and blow their windmills away : but who is the man that dare abide King Richard's anger ; cross the Lion in his path, and take him by the whiskers ! Abbot Samson too ; he is that man, with justice on his side. The case was this. Adam de Cokefield, one of the chief feudatories of St. Edmund, and a principal man in the Eastern Counties, died, leaving large possessions, and for heiress a daughter of three months ; who by clear law, as all men know, became thus Abbot Samson's ward ; whom accordingly he proceeded to dispose of to such person as seemed fittest. But now King Richard has another person in view, to whom the little ward and her great possessions were a suitable thing. He, by letter, requests that Abbot Samson will have the goodness to give her to this person. Abbot Samson, with deep humility, replies that she is already given. New letters from Richard, of severer tenor ; answered with new deep humilities, with gifts and entreaties, with no promise of obedience. King Richard's ire is kindled ; messengers arrive at St. Edmundsbury, with emphatic message to obey or tremble ! Abbot Samson, wisely silent as to the King's threats, makes answer : 'The King can send if he will, and seize the ward : force and power he has to do his pleasure, and abolish the whole Abbey. But I, for my part, never can be bent to wish this that he seeks, nor shall it by me be ever done. For there is danger lest such things be

made a precedent of, to the prejudice of my successors, *Videat Altissimus*, Let the Most High look on it. Whatsoever thing shall befall I will patiently endure.'

Such was Abbot Samson's deliberate decision. Why not? Cœur-de-Lion is very dreadful, but not the dreadfullest. *Videat Altissimus*. I reverence Cœur-de-Lion to the marrow of my bones, and will in all right things be *homo suus*; but it is not, properly speaking, with terror, with any fear at all. On the whole, have I not looked on the face of 'Satan with outspread wings'; steadily into Hell-fire these seven-and-forty years;—and was not melted into terror even at that, such the Lord's goodness to me? Cœur-de-Lion!

Richard swore tornado oaths, worse than our armies in Flanders, To be revenged on that proud Priest. But in the end he discovered that the Priest was right; and forgave him, and even loved him. 'King Richard wrote, soon after, to Abbot Samson, That he wanted one or two of the St. Edmundsbury dogs, which he heard were good.' Abbot Samson sent him dogs of the best; Richard replied by the present of a ring, which Pope Innocent the Third had given him. Thou brave Richard, thou brave Samson! Richard too, I suppose, 'loved a man,' and knew one when he saw him.

JOHN RUSKIN (1819–1900), author, artist, and social reformer, was educated at King's College, London, and Christ Church, Oxford, and studied drawing under Copley Fielding and J. D. Harding. He won the Newdigate Prize for English verse in 1839. In 1840 he first made acquaintance with Turner, of whose work he became an enthusiastic admirer. In 1843 appeared the first three volumes of *Modern Painters*, the work which did more than anything else to win appreciation for Turner. Ruskin soon became famous as an art critic. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, which had great influence in



encouraging a taste for Gothic architecture, appeared in 1849, and *Stones of Venice* 1851-3. He warmly defended the pre-Raphaelite school of painting, wrote annual 'Notes on the Royal Academy', and gave drawing lessons at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street. During the later fifties he devoted much time to the study of economic questions, and in 1860 he published *Unto this Last* and various letters and pamphlets on education. He gave a large number of lectures on artistic, ethical, and economic subjects, many of which were afterwards published in book form. Among the most famous of these are the *Edinburgh Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (published 1854), *Sesame and Lilies* (1865), *The Crown of Wild Olive* (1866), and *Ethics of the Dust* (1866). In 1870 he was appointed first Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford, and founded a drawing school there. In 1871 he settled at Brantwood, near Coniston Lake, where he spent the rest of his life. He was greatly interested in all handicrafts, particularly in weaving and embroidery, and did much to encourage hand-work of all kinds. He established *Fors Clavigera*, a monthly letter to workmen and labourers, and founded the 'Guild of St. George', the chief principle of which was that 'food can only be got out of the ground and happiness out of honesty'. In spite of chronic ill health he was a most prolific writer. Fifty-six works of his are mentioned in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and these include a large number of guide books to galleries and churches, such as *Mornings in Florence* (1875-7), *The Bible of Amiens* (1880-5), &c.

## OF THE RANK AND RELATIONS OF THE THEORETIC FACULTY

(From *Modern Painters*)

MAN's use and function (and let him who will not grant me this follow me no farther, for this I purpose always to assume) is, to be the witness of the glory of God, and to advance that glory by his reasonable obedience and resultant happiness.

Whatever enables us to fulfil this function, is in the pure and first sense of the word Useful to us. Pre-

eminently therefore whatever sets the glory of God more brightly before us. But things that only help us to exist are in a secondary and mean sense, useful; or rather, if they be looked for alone, they are useless and worse, for it would be better that we should not exist, than that we should guiltily disappoint the purposes of existence.

And yet people speak in this working age, when they speak from their hearts, as if houses, and lands, and food, and raiment, were alone useful, and as if Sight, Thought, and Admiration, were all profitless, so that men insolently call themselves Utilitarians, who would turn, if they had their way, themselves and their race into vegetables; men who think, as far as such can be said to think, that the meat is more than the life, and the raiment than the body, who look to the earth as a stable, and to its fruit as fodder; vinedressers and husbandmen, who love the corn they grind, and the grapes they crush, better than the gardens of the Angels upon the slopes of Eden, hewers of wood and drawers of water, who think that the wood they hew and the water they draw, are better than the pine-forests that cover the mountains like the shadow of God, and than the great rivers that move like His eternity. And so comes upon us that Woe of the preacher, that though God 'hath made everything beautiful in His time, also He hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end'.

This Nebuchadnezzar curse, that sends us to grass like oxen, seems to follow but too closely on the excess or continuance of national power and peace. In the perplexities of nations, in their struggles for existence, in their infancy, their impotence, or even their disorganization, they have higher hopes and nobler passions. Out

of the suffering comes the serious mind ; out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of the endurance, the fortitude; out of the deliverance, the faith : but now when they have learned to live under providence of laws, and with decency and justice of regard for each other ; and when they have done away with violent and external sources of suffering, worse evils seem arising out of their rest, evils that vex less and mortify more, that suck the blood though they do not shed it, and ossify the heart though they do not torture it. And deep though the causes of thankfulness must be to every people at peace with others and at unity in itself, there are causes of fear also, a fear greater than of sword and sedition, that dependence on God may be forgotten because the bread is given and the water sure, that gratitude to Him may cease because His constancy of protection has taken the semblance of a natural law, that heavenly hope may grow faint amidst the full fruition of the world, that Selfishness may take place of undemanded devotion, compassion be lost in vainglory, and love in dissimulation, that enervation may succeed to strength, apathy to patience, and the noise of jesting words and foulness of dark thoughts, to the earnest purity of the girded loins and the burning lamp. About the river of human life there is a wintry wind, though a heavenly sunshine ; the iris colours its agitation, the frost fixes upon its repose. Let us beware that our rest become not the rest of stones, which, so long as they are torrent-tossed, and thunder-stricken, maintain their majesty, but when the stream is silent, and the storm passed, suffer the grass to cover them and the lichen to feed on them, and are ploughed down into dust.

## ST. MARK'S

(From *The Stones of Venice*)

A YARD or two farther, we pass the hostelry of the Black Eagle, and, glancing as we pass through the square door of marble, deeply moulded, in the outer wall, we see the shadows of its pergola of vines resting on an ancient well, with a pointed shield carved on its side; and so presently emerge on the bridge and Campo San Moisè, whence to the entrance into St. Mark's Place, called the Bocca di Piazza (mouth of the square), the Venetian character is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful façade of San Moisè, which we will pause at another time to examine, and then by the modernizing of the shops as they near the piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians. We will push fast through them into the shadow of the pillars at the end of the 'Bocca di Piazza', and then we forget them all; for between those pillars there opens a great light, and, in the midst of it, as we advance slowly, the vast tower of St. Mark seems to lift itself visibly forth from the level field of chequered stones; and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low

pyramid of coloured light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and, in the midst of it, the solemn forms of angels, sceptred, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, ‘their bluest veins to kiss’—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolt, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark’s Lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as

if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.

And what effect has this splendour on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—not 'of them that sell doves' for sacrifice, but of the vendors of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of cafés, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty journals; in its centre the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the miserere, and the sullen crowd thickening round them,—a crowd which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children,—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing,—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and His angels look down upon it continually.

## CHAPTER XIV

### TENNYSON AND BROWNING

IN the reassertion of literary freedom the Lake School and the Romantic movement had been unconscious allies. They quarrelled among themselves, as rival leaders of the host have not infrequently done, but they presented a common front against the forces of tradition and conventionalism. The conquest which they achieved became the heritage of their younger contemporaries and successors: Campbell, with a true lyric song of narrow compass; Moore, a cage-bird taught to whistle an artificial tune but remembering ever and again his native wood-notes; the hectic talent of Beddoes, the romantic feeling of Hogg, the manliness of Sir Henry Taylor, the Mendelssohnian church music of Keble—all these grew and burgeoned in the larger atmosphere which surrounded English letters during the first thirty years of the century. From among them emerged the two men of genius by whom the poetry of our mid-Victorian age is chiefly represented. Tennyson's first acknowledged volume appeared in 1830; in 1833 appeared Browning's *Pauline*.

Tennyson is a great artist rather than a great thinker. He does not penetrate to the recesses of human nature—its energy, its revolt, its power of reconstruction: he dismisses a revolution in Paris as 'the red fool-fury of the Seine'; he is interested in science not because it makes fresh discoveries, but because it extends the domain of law. Of a temper essentially conservative, he has little sympathy with new movements and new beliefs: he is the poet of dignity, of temperance, of restraint,

a typical English gentleman incapable of a base thought or an unjust action, but rather suspicious of that blind enthusiasm which will stake all on a single cast. Much influenced by Byron, he has not that virility of passion which Byron's pose never entirely concealed: his greatest work is usually his least passionate, his extremes of feeling strike false notes, as though touched by an unaccustomed hand—below pitch in *Locksley Hall*, strained above it in *Maud* and *Stylites*. He has a wonderfully accurate eye for the externals of landscape, but he does not, like Wordsworth, lay bare to our gaze its inner meaning: the scene is full of charm and colour, but we miss the essential significance which should vitalize it all. On the other hand, for sheer mastery of words he has no superior in our language except Keats. He was, we are told, slow and deliberate in composition: 'I had rather lose a thought,' he said, 'than get two s's together,' and it is one of the supreme triumphs of his art that a method so artificial should appear spontaneous. Throughout his life he was continually perfecting the command of his instrument: a comparison between the first and second versions of *Oenone* is not less significant than a contrast between the chime of *Lilian* or *Oriana* and the deep full melody of *Maeldune* or *Crossing the Bar*. His music is written in few keys, but in shapeliness of rhythm and curve it is never at fault.

Almost every quality which can be found in Tennyson may be matched in Browning by its exact opposite. He is one of the most adventurous of poets: his lyric forms are innumerable, his blank verse is a breathless impromptu, his interest in the problems of life and thought is unlimited. There is a figure in logic called the enthymeme, which omits part of the argument in the confident hope that the hearer will take it for granted. Browning's poetry is the enthymeme running riot.



It never seems to occur to him that the reader may not know enough Italian history to supply the lacunae in *Sordello*, or enough psychology to thread the mazes of *Pauline*: we must be musicians to follow *Abt Vogler*, we must be artists to follow *Old Pictures in Florence*: and all the while our guide marches ahead over briars and boulders without any conception that the way may be difficult for our faltering steps. The ideas come so fast that a theory is compressed into half a line, a crisis hinted in a nickname, a whole succession of events crystallized in a single epithet. To comprehend the obscurer work of Browning needs not a commentary on the poem, but a history of the subject with which it deals.

Hence he is at his best when he treats of some broad elementary fact of human nature; with the passion of *Life in a Love*, with the vicissitudes of fame in *The Patriot*, with the questionings of religious belief in *Karshish*, with its serene acceptance in *The Guardian Angel*. And through all alike, though we are interested in the form, we are mainly impressed by the content. No great poet has given less pleasure to the ear, few have given more impetus to the understanding. As we read him we see the whole nineteenth century deploy before us: its discoveries, its controversies, its ideals, its unshakable belief in human progress; and if the verse is often rugged and unmusical, we are so deeply absorbed by the thought that we forget to criticize.

'People are always debating,' said Goethe to Schiller, 'which of us is the greater poet. They would do better to give thanks that they have both of us.' We may feel the same with regard to Tennyson and Browning. They are in no way comparable: the strength of each is the weakness of the other, and it is idle to forecast with which

of them posterity will be the more concerned. To our own age Tennyson stands for beauty of form and Browning for stimulus of thought: to read one is an artistic education, to study the other is to graduate in the school of life.

ALFRED TENNYSON, first Baron (1809-1892), was the son of a Lincolnshire clergyman. He wrote verses from a very early age, and at eleven had already written 'hundreds and hundreds of lines in the regular Popeian metre'. In 1827 he and his brother Charles published a joint volume entitled *Poems by two Brothers*. In 1828 the brothers went to Cambridge, and here Alfred formed his memorable friendship with Arthur Hallam. He won a University prize for a poem on 'Timbuctoo' in 1829, and soon after published a slender volume of *Poems chiefly Lyrical*. In 1832 appeared another volume of *Poems*, which included 'The Lady of Shalott,' 'Ænone,' 'The Miller's Daughter,' 'A Dream of Fair Women,' and many others. In September, 1833, Hallam died suddenly, and though *In Memoriam* was not published till seventeen years later, Tennyson wrote numerous fragmentary verses at the time, some of which were afterwards included in the complete work. In 1842 came another volume of *Poems*, including 'Locksley Hall,' 'Morte d'Arthur,' 'Ulysses,' 'Godiva,' and 'Break, break, break.' In 1847 came *The Princess*. *In Memoriam* appeared in 1850, and in the same year Tennyson was made Poet Laureate. *Maud* appeared in 1855, and Tennyson now began to work steadily at the Arthurian legends. *The Idylls of the King* appeared in 1859. In the meantime he had published a number of 'incidental' poems on various occasions, including the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, and the *Charge of the Light Brigade*. The volume entitled *Enoch Arden* appeared in 1864. Various poems in magazines followed, but there was no further volume until *The Holy Grail* in 1869. In 1875 came his first drama, *Queen Mary*, which was followed by *Harold* in 1876, and *The Falcon* in 1879. In 1880 came *Ballads and Poems*, including 'The Revenge'. *The Cup* was produced at the Lyceum in 1881, *The Promise of May* at the Globe in 1882, and *Becket* at the Lyceum in 1884. His last volumes, *Tiresias*, *Demeter*, and *The Death of Ænone*, were published respectively in 1885, 1889, and 1892.

## LYRICS FROM 'THE PRINCESS'

## I

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

10

## II

SWEET and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea !  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me ;  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps  
Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon :  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

20

## III

THE splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story :  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory. 30  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river : 40  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

## IV

HOMER they brought her warrior dead :  
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry :  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved, 50  
Truest friend and noblest foe ;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face ;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
 Set his child upon her knee—  
 Like summer tempest came her tears—  
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

60

## V

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;  
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,  
 With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
 But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?  
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?  
 I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
 Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!  
 Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;  
 Ask me no more.

70

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:  
 I strove against the stream and all in vain:  
 Let the great river take me to the main:  
 No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
 Ask me no more.

## ENID

BUT when the third day from the hunting-morn  
 Made a low splendour in the world, and wings  
 Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay  
 With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,  
 Among the dancing shadows of the birds,  
 Woke and bethought her of her promise given—  
 No later than last eve to Prince Geraint—  
 So bent he seem'd on going the third day,  
 He would not leave her, till her promise given—  
 To ride with him this morning to the court,

10

And there be made known to the stately Queen,  
And there be wedded with all ceremony.  
At this she cast her eyes upon her dress,  
And thought it never yet had look'd so mean.  
For as a leaf in mid-November is  
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd  
The dress that now she look'd on to the dress  
She look'd on ere the coming of Geraint.  
And still she look'd, and still the terror grew  
Of that strange bright and dreadful thing, a court, 20  
All staring at her in her faded silk :  
And softly to her own sweet heart she said :

‘This noble prince who won our earldom back,  
So splendid in his acts and his attire,  
Sweet heaven, how much I shall discredit him !  
Would he could tarry with us here awhile !  
But being so beholden to the Prince,  
It were but little grace in any of us,  
Bent as he seem'd on going this third day,  
To seek a second favour at his hands 30  
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,  
Myself would work eye dim, and finger lame,  
Far liefer than so much discredit him.’

And Enid fell in longing for a dress  
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a costly gift  
Of her good mother, given her on the night  
Before her birthday, three sad years ago,  
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd their house,  
And scatter'd all they had to all the winds :  
For while the mother show'd it, and the two 40  
Were turning and admiring it, the work  
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry  
That Edyrn's men were on them, and they fled

With little save the jewels they had on,  
Which being sold and sold had bought them bread :  
And Edyrn's men had caught them in their flight,  
And placed them in this ruin ; and she wish'd  
The Prince had found her in her ancient home ;  
Then let her fancy flit across the past,  
And roam the goodly places that she knew ; 50  
And last bethought her how she used to watch,  
Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ;  
And one was patch'd and blurr'd and lustreless  
Among his burnish'd brethren of the pool ;  
And half-asleep she made comparison  
Of that and these to her own faded self  
And the gay court, and fell asleep again ;  
And dreamt herself was such a faded form  
Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool ;  
But this was in the garden of a king ; 60  
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew  
That all was bright ; that all about were birds  
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work ;  
That all the turf was rich in plots that look'd  
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it ;  
And lords and ladies of the high court went  
In silver tissue talking things of state ;  
And children of the king in cloth of gold  
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down the walks  
And while she thought 'They will not see me', came 70  
A stately queen whose name was Guinevere,  
And all the children in their cloth of gold  
Ran to her, crying, 'If we have fish at all  
Let them be gold ; and charge the gardeners now  
To pick the faded creature from the pool,  
And cast it on the mixen<sup>1</sup> that it die.'

<sup>1</sup> Rubbish-heap.

And therewithal one came and seized on her,  
And Enid started waking, with her heart  
All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,  
And lo ! it was her mother grasping her 80  
To get her well awake ; and in her hand  
A suit of bright apparel, which she laid  
Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly :

‘ See here, my child, how fresh the colours look,  
How fast they hold, like colours of a shell  
That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.  
Why not ? it never yet was worn, I trow :  
Look on it, child, and tell me if you know it.’

But while the women thus rejoiced, Geraint  
Woke where he slept in the high hall, and call'd 90  
For Enid, and when Yniol made report  
Of that good mother making Enid gay  
In such apparel as might well beseem  
His princess, or indeed the stately Queen,  
He answer'd : ‘ Earl, entreat her by my love,  
Albeit I give no reason but my wish,  
That she ride with me in her faded silk.’  
Yniol with that hard message went ; it fell,  
Like flaws in summer laying lusty corn :  
For Enid, all abash'd she knew not why, 100  
Dared not to glance at her good mother's face,  
But silently, in all obedience,  
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,  
Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd gift,  
And robed them in her ancient suit again,  
And so descended. Never man rejoiced  
More than Geraint to greet her thus attired ;  
And glancing all at once as keenly at her,



As careful robins eye the delver's toil,  
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall, 110  
But rested with her sweet face satisfied ;  
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,  
Her by both hands he caught, and sweetly said :

‘O my new mother, be not wroth or grieved  
At your new son, for my petition to her.  
When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,  
In words whose echo lasts, they were so sweet,  
Made promise, that whatever bride I brought,  
Herself would clothe her like the sun in Heaven.  
Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd hold, 120  
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,  
I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind Queen,  
No hand but hers, should make your Enid burst  
Sunlike from cloud—and likewise thought perhaps,  
That service done so graciously would bind  
The two together ; for I wish the two  
To love each other : how should Enid find  
A nobler friend ? Another thought I had ;  
I came among you here so suddenly,  
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists 130  
Might well have served for proof that I was loved,  
I doubted whether filial tenderness,  
Or easy nature, did not let itself  
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal ;  
Or whether some false sense in her own self  
Of my contrasting brightness, overbore  
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall ;  
And such a sense might make her long for court  
And all its dangerous glories : and I thought,  
That could I someway prove such force in her 140  
Link'd with such love for me, that at a word  
(No reason given her) she could cast aside

A splendour dear to women, new to her,  
 And therefore dearer ; or if not so new,  
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power  
 Of intermitted custom ; then I felt  
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and flows,  
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I do rest,  
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,  
 That never shadow of mistrust can cross 150  
 Between us. Grant me pardon for my thoughts :  
 And for my strange petition I will make  
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,  
 When your fair child shall wear your costly gift  
 Beside your own warm hearth, with, on her knees,  
 Who knows ? another gift of the high God,  
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to lisp you thanks.'

## IN MEMORIAM

## INTRODUCTION

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
     Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
     By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
 Believing where we cannot prove ;  
 Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;  
     Thou madest Life in man and brute ;  
     Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot  
 Is on the skull which thou hast made.  
 Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :  
     Thou madest man, he knows not why ; 10  
     He thinks he was not made to die ;  
 And thou hast made him : thou art just.  
 Thou seemest human and divine,  
     The highest, holiest manhood, thou :  
     Our wills are ours, we know not how ;  
 Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;  
They have their day and cease to be :  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

20

We have but faith : we cannot know ;  
For knowledge is of things we see ;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell ;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;  
We mock thee when we do not fear :  
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

30

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;  
What seem'd my worth since I began :  
For merit lives from man to man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.

40

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,  
Confusions of a wasted youth ;  
Forgive them where they fail in truth,  
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

## CV

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light :  
The year is dying in the night ;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow : 50  
The year is going, let him go ;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more ;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.  
Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife ;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws. 60  
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times ;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.  
Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite ;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.  
Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ; 70  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.  
Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.  
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd  
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades 10  
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;  
For always roaming with a hungry heart  
Much have I seen and known; cities of men  
And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;  
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,  
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro  
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades 20  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life  
Were all too little, and of one to me  
Little remains: but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this grey spirit yearning in desire 30  
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
 Of common duties, decent not to fail 40  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:  
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,  
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with  
 me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;  
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ; 50  
 Death closes all: but something ere the end,  
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :  
 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.

Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
 The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'

We are not now that strength which in old days  
 Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

70

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889) showed a strong taste for music, and in early life set a number of songs. His first poem was *Pauline*, published 1832. In 1834 he first visited Italy, a country which exercised an extraordinary influence upon his imagination, and with whose struggle for liberty he was in close sympathy. *Paracelsus* appeared in 1835, and was praised by Carlyle, Wordsworth, Dickens, and other literary men of note. *Strafford* was produced at Covent Garden in 1837, with Macready in the title-rôle. In 1840 came *Sordello*, which was followed by *Bells and Pomegranates*, 1841-6 (including 'Pippa Passes', 'Luria', and other pieces). In 1846 he married Elizabeth Barrett, herself a poetess of no small note, and took her to Italy, and from this time till Mrs. Browning's death in 1861 they lived chiefly in Florence and Rome. *Dramatis Personae* appeared in 1864, *The Ring and the Book* in four successive instalments in 1868-9, *Balaustion's Adventure* and *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* in 1871, *Fifine at the Fair* in 1872, *Red Cotton Night-cap Country* in 1873, *The Inn Album* in 1875, *Pacchiarotto* in 1876, translation of *Agamemnon* in 1877, *La Saisiaz* and *Two Poets of Croisic* in 1878, and *Dramatic Idylls*, first series, in 1879, second series in 1880. His last volume of poems, *Asolando*, appeared on the day of his death.

### SONG FROM 'PIPPA PASSES'

THE year's at the spring,  
 And day's at the morn ;  
 Morning's at seven ;  
 The hill-side's dew-pearled ;  
 The lark's on the wing ;  
 The snail's on the thorn ;  
 God's in His heaven—  
 All's right with the world !

## LIFE IN A LOVE

ESCAPE me ?

Never—

Beloved !

While I am I, and you are you,

So long as the world contains us both,

Me the loving and you the loth,

While the one eludes, must the other pursue.

My life is a fault at last, I fear :

It seems too much like a fate, indeed !

Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.

10

But what if I fail of my purpose here ?

It is but to keep the nerves at strain,

To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,

And baffled, get up and begin again,—

So the chace takes up one's life, that's all.

While, look but once from your farthest bound

At me so deep in the dust and dark,

No sooner the old hope drops to ground

Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,

I shape me—

20

Ever

Removed !

## THE PATRIOT

## AN OLD STORY

## I

It was roses, roses, all the way,

With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :

The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,

The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,

A year ago on this very day !



## II

The air broke into a mist with bells,

The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.

Had I said, 'Good folk, mere noise repels—

But give me your sun from yonder skies!'

They had answered, 'And afterward, what else?' 16

## III

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun

To give it my loving friends to keep!

Nought man could do, have I left undone:

And you see my harvest, what I reap

This very day, now a year is run.

## IV

There's nobody on the house-tops now—

Just a palsied few at the windows set;

For the best of the sight is, all allow,

At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,

By the very scaffold's foot, I trow. 20

## V

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,

A rope cuts both my wrists behind;

And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,

For they fling, whoever has a mind,

Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

## VI

Thus I entered, and thus I go!

In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.

'Paid by the World,—what dost thou owe

Me?' God might question: now instead,

'Tis God shall repay! I am safer so. 30

## THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

## A PICTURE AT FANO

## I

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave  
 That child, when thou hast done with him, for me!  
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve  
 Shall find performed thy special ministry  
 And time come for departure, thou, suspending  
 Thy flight, mayst see another child for tending,  
 Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

## II

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,  
 From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,  
 —And suddenly my head is covered o'er 10  
 With those wings, white above the child who prays  
 Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee guarding  
 Me, out of all the world ; for me, discarding  
 Yon Heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door!

## III

I would not look up thither past thy head  
 Because the door opes, like that child, I know,  
 For I should have thy gracious face instead,  
 Thou bird of God ! And wilt thou bend me low  
 Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,  
 And lift them up to pray, and gently tether 20  
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread ?

## IV

If this was ever granted, I would rest  
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands  
 Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,  
 Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,  
 Back to its proper size again, and smoothing  
 Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,  
 And all lay quiet, happy and supprest.

## V

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired !

I think how I should view the earth and skies 30

And sea, when once again my brow was bared

After thy healing, with such different eyes.

O, world, as God has made it ! all is beauty :

And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.

What further may be sought for or declared ?

## VI

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach

(Alfred, dear friend !)—that little child to pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each

Pressed gently,—with his own head turned away 40

Over the earth where so much lay before him

Of work to do, though Heaven was opening o'er him,

And he was left at Fano by the beach.

## VII

We were at Fano, and three times we went

To sit and see him in his chapel there,

And drink his beauty to our soul's content

—My angel with me too : and since I care

For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power

And glory comes this picture for a dower,

Fraught with a pathos so magnificent),

## VIII

And since he did not work so earnestly 50

At all times, and has else endured some wrong—

I took one thought his picture struck from me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.

My Love is here. Where are you, dear old friend ?

How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end ?

This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

## AN EPISTLE

CONTAINING THE STRANGE MEDICAL EXPERIENCE OF KARSHISH,  
THE ARAB PHYSICIAN

KARSHISH, the picker-up of learning's crumbs,  
The not-incurious in God's handiwork  
(This man's-flesh He hath admirably made,  
Blown like a bubble, kneaded like a paste,  
To coop up and keep down on earth a space  
That puff of vapour from His mouth, man's soul)  
—To Abib, all-sagacious in our art,  
Breeder in me of what poor skill I boast,  
Like me inquisitive how pricks and cracks  
Befall the flesh through too much stress and strain,      10  
Whereby the wily vapour fain would slip  
Back and rejoin its source before the term,—  
And aptest in contrivance, under God,  
To baffle it by deftly stopping such :—  
The vagrant Scholar to his Sage at home  
Sends greeting (health and knowledge, fame with peace)  
Three samples of true snake-stone—rarer still,  
One of the other sort, the melon-shaped,  
(But fitter, pounded fine, for charms than drugs)  
And writeth now the twenty-second time.      20

My journeyings were brought to Jericho :  
Thus I resume. Who studious in our art  
Shall count a little labour unpaid ?  
I have shed sweat enough, left flesh and bone  
On many a flinty furlong of this land.  
Also, the country-side is all on fire  
With rumours of a marching hitherward :  
Some say Vespasian cometh, some, his son.

HADOW. III

D d

A black lynx snarled and pricked a tufted ear ;  
Lust of my blood inflamed his yellow balls: 30  
I cried and threw my staff and he was gone.  
Twice have the robbers stripped and beaten me,  
And once a town declared me for a spy,  
But at the end, I reach Jerusalem,  
Since this poor covert where I pass the night,  
This Bethany, lies scarce the distance thence  
A man with plague-sores at the third degree  
Runs till he drops down dead. Thou laughest here !  
'Sooth, it elates me, thus reposed and safe,  
To void the stuffing of my travel-scrip 40  
And share with thee whatever Jewry yields.  
A viscid choler is observable  
In tertians<sup>1</sup>, I was nearly bold to say,  
And falling-sickness hath a happier cure  
Than our school wots of : there's a spider here  
Weaves no web, watches on the ledge of tombs,  
Sprinkled with mottles on an ash-grey back ;  
Take five and drop them . . . but who knows his mind,  
The Syrian run-a-gate I trust this to ?  
His service payeth me a sublimate 50  
Blown up his nose to help the ailing eye.  
Best wait : I reach Jerusalem at morn,  
There set in order my experiences,  
Gather what most deserves, and give thee all—  
Or I might add, Judaea's gum-tragacanth<sup>2</sup>  
Scales off in purer flakes, shines clearer-grained,  
Cracks 'twixt the pestle and the porphyry,  
In fine exceeds our produce. Scalp-disease  
Confounds me, crossing so with leprosy—  
Thou hadst admired one sort I gained at Zoar— 60  
But zeal outruns discretion. Here I end.

<sup>1</sup> Intermittent fever.<sup>2</sup> Gum of the shrub *Astragalus*.

Yet stay : my Syrian blinketh gratefully,  
 Protesteth his devotion is my price—  
 Suppose I write what harms not, though he steal ?  
 I half resolve to tell thee, yet I blush,  
 What set me off a-writing first of all.  
 An itch I had, a sting to write, a tang ;  
 For, be it this town's barrenness—or else  
 The Man had something in the look of him—  
 His case has struck me far more than 'tis worth. 70  
 So, pardon if—(lest presently I lose  
 In the great press of novelty at hand  
 The care and pains this somehow stole from me)  
 I bid thee take the thing while fresh in mind,  
 Almost in sight—for, wilt thou have the truth ?  
 The very man is gone from me but now,  
 Whose ailment is the subject of discourse.  
 Thus then, and let thy better wit help all.

'Tis but a case of mania—subinduced  
 By epilepsy, at the turning-point 80  
 Of trance prolonged unduly some three days,  
 When, by the exhibition of some drug  
 Or spell, exorcization, stroke of art  
 Unknown to me and which 'twere well to know,  
 The evil thing out-breaking all at once  
 Left the man whole and sound of body indeed,—  
 But, flinging, so to speak, life's gates too wide,  
 Making a clear house of it too suddenly,  
 The first conceit that entered might inscribe  
 Whatever it was minded on the wall 90  
 So plainly at that vantage, as it were,  
 (First come, first served) that nothing subsequent  
 Attaineth to erase those fancy-scrawls  
 The just-retained and new-established soul

Hath gotten now so thoroughly by heart  
That henceforth she will read or these or none.  
And first—the man's own firm conviction rests  
That he was dead (in fact they buried him)  
—That he was dead and then restored to life  
By a Nazarene physician of his tribe : 100  
—'Sayeth, the same bade 'Rise', and he did rise.  
'Such cases are diurnal,' thou wilt cry.  
Not so this figment!—not, that such a fume,  
Instead of giving way to time and health,  
Should eat itself into the life of life,  
As saffron tingeth flesh, blood, bones and all!  
For see, how he takes up the after-life.  
The man—it is one Lazarus a Jew,  
Sanguine, proportioned, fifty years of age,  
The body's habit wholly laudable, 110  
As much, indeed, beyond the common health  
As he were made and put aside to show.  
Think, could we penetrate by any drug  
And bathe the wearied soul and worried flesh,  
And bring it clear and fair, by three days' sleep!  
Whence has the man the balm that brightens all?  
This grown man eyes the world now like a child.  
Some elders of his tribe, I should premise,  
Led in their friend, obedient as a sheep,  
To bear my inquisition. While they spoke, 120  
Now sharply, now with sorrow,—told the case,—  
He listened not except I spoke to him,  
But folded his two hands and let them talk,  
Watching the flies that buzzed: and yet no fool.  
And that's a sample how his years must go.  
Look if a beggar, in fixed middle-life,  
Should find a treasure, can he use the same  
With straitened habits and with tastes starved small,

And take at once to his impoverished brain  
The sudden element that changes things, 130  
That sets the undreamed-of rapture at his hand,  
And puts the cheap old joy in the scorned dust?  
Is he not such an one as moves to mirth—  
Warily parsimonious, when no need,  
Wasteful as drunkenness at undue times?  
All prudent counsel as to what befits  
The golden mean, is lost on such an one:  
The man's fantastic will is the man's law.  
So here—we'll call the treasure knowledge, say,  
Increased beyond the fleshly faculty— 140  
Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,  
Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing Heaven.  
The man is witless of the size, the sum,  
The value in proportion of all things,  
Or whether it be little or be much.  
Discourse to him of prodigious armaments  
Assembled to besiege his city now,  
And of the passing of a mule with gourds—  
'Tis one! Then take it on the other side,  
Speak of some trifling fact—he will gaze rapt, 150  
With stupor at its very littleness,  
(Far as I see)—as if in that indeed  
He caught prodigious import, whole results;  
And so will turn to us the bystanders  
In ever the same stupor (note this point)  
That we too see not with his opened eyes.  
Wonder and doubt come wrongly into play,  
Preposterously, at cross purposes.  
Should his child sicken unto death,—why, look  
For scarce abatement of his cheerfulness, 160  
Or pretermission of his daily craft—  
While a word, gesture, glance, from that same child



At play or in the school or laid asleep,  
Will startle him to an agony of fear,  
Exasperation, just as like ! demand  
The reason why—' 'tis but a word,' object—  
' A gesture '—he regards thee as our lord  
Who lived there in the pyramid alone,  
Looked at us, dost thou mind ?—when being young  
We both would unadvisedly recite 170  
Some charm's beginning, from that book of his,  
Able to bid the sun throb wide and burst  
All into stars, as suns grown old are wont.  
Thou and the child have each a veil alike  
Thrown o'er your heads, from under which ye both  
Stretch your blind hands and trifle with a match  
Over a mine of Greek fire, did ye know !  
He holds on firmly to some thread of life—  
(It is the life to lead perforcedly)  
Which runs across some vast distracting orb 180  
Of glory on either side that meagre thread,  
Which, conscious of, he must not enter yet—  
The spiritual life around the earthly life !  
The law of that is known to him as this—  
His heart and brain move there, his feet stay here.  
So is the man perplexed with impulses  
Sudden to start off crosswise, not straight on,  
Proclaiming what is Right and Wrong across,  
And not along, this black thread through the blaze—  
' It should be ' balked by ' here it cannot be ' 190  
And oft the man's soul springs into his face  
As if he saw again and heard again  
His sage that bade him ' Rise ' and he did rise.  
Something, a word, a tick of the blood within  
Admonishes—then back he sinks at once  
To ashes, that was very fire before,

In sedulous recurrence to his trade  
Whereby he earneth him the daily bread ;  
And studiously the humbler for that pride,  
Professedly the faultier that he knows 200  
God's secret, while he holds the thread of life.  
Indeed the especial marking of the man  
Is prone submission to the Heavenly will—  
Seeing it, what it is, and why it is.  
'Saying, he will wait patient to the last  
For that same death which must restore his being  
To equilibrium, body loosening soul  
Divorced even now by premature full growth :  
He will live, nay, it pleaseth him to live  
So long as God please, and just how God please. 210  
He even seeketh not to please God more  
(Which meaneth, otherwise) than as God please.  
Hence I perceive not he affects to preach  
The doctrine of his sect whate'er it be,  
Make proselytes as madmen thirst to do :  
How can he give his neighbour the real ground,  
His own conviction ? ardent as he is—  
Call his great truth a lie, why, still the old  
'Be it as God please' reassureth him.  
I probed the sore as thy disciple should— 220  
'How, beast,' said I, 'this stolid carelessness  
Sufficeth thee, when Rome is on her march  
To stamp out like a little spark thy town,  
Thy tribe, thy crazy tale and thee at once ?'  
He merely looked with his large eyes on me.  
The man is apathetic, you deduce ?  
Contrariwise he loves both old and young,  
Able and weak—affects the very brutes  
And birds—how say I ? flowers of the field—  
As a wise workman recognizes tools 230

In a master's workshop, loving what they make.  
 Thus is the man as harmless as a lamb :  
 Only impatient, let him do his best,  
 At ignorance and carelessness and sin—  
 An indignation which is promptly curbed :  
 As when in certain travels I have feigned  
 To be an ignoramus in our art  
 According to some preconceived design,  
 And happed to hear the land's practitioners  
 Steeped in conceit sublimed by ignorance, 240  
 Prattle fantastically on disease,  
 Its cause and cure—and I must hold my peace !

Thou wilt object—why have I not ere this  
 Sought out the sage himself, the Nazarene  
 Who wrought this cure, inquiring at the source,  
 Conferring with the frankness that befits ?  
 Alas ! it grieveth me, the learned leech  
 Perished in a tumult many years ago,  
 Accused,—our learning's fate,—of wizardry,  
 Rebellion, to the setting up a rule 250  
 And creed prodigious as described to me.  
 His death which happened when the earthquake fell  
 (Prefiguring, as soon appeared, the loss  
 To occult learning in our lord the sage  
 Who lived there in the pyramid alone)  
 Was wrought by the mad people—that's their wont—  
 On vain recourse, as I conjecture it,  
 To his tried virtue, for miraculous help—  
 How could he stop the earthquake ? That's their way !  
 The other imputations must be lies : 260  
 But take one—though I loathe to give it thee,  
 In mere respect to any good man's fame !  
 (And after all, our patient Lazarus

Is stark mad ; should we count on what he says ?  
Perhaps not : though in writing to a leech  
'Tis well to keep back nothing of a case.)  
This man so cured regards the curer then,  
As—God forgive me—who but God himself,  
Creator and Sustainer of the world,  
That came and dwelt in flesh on it awhile ! 270  
—'Sayeth that such an One was born and lived,  
Taught, healed the sick, broke bread at his own house,  
Then died, with Lazarus bv. for aught I know,  
And yet was . . . what I said nor choose repeat,  
And must have so avouched himself, in fact,  
In hearing of this very Lazarus  
Who saith—but why all this of what he saith ?  
Why write of trivial matters, things of price  
Calling at every moment for remark ?  
I noticed on the margin of a pool 280  
Blue-flowering borage, the Aleppo sort,  
Aboundeth, very nitrous. It is strange !

Thy pardon for this long and tedious case,  
Which, now that I review it, needs must seem  
Unduly dwelt on, proluxly set forth !  
Nor I myself discern in what is writ  
Good cause for the peculiar interest  
And awe indeed this man has touched me with.  
Perhaps the journey's end, the weariness  
Had wrought upon me first. I met him thus : 290  
I crossed a ridge of short sharp broken hills  
Like an old lion's cheek-teeth. Out there came  
A moon made like a face with certain spots  
Multiform, manifold and menacing :  
Then a wind rose behind me. So we met  
In this old sleepy town at unaware,

The man and I. I send thee what is writ.  
Regard it as a chance, a matter risked  
To this ambiguous Syrian—he may lose,  
Or steal, or give it thee with equal good. 300  
Jerusalem's repose shall make amends  
For time this letter wastes, thy time and mine ;  
Till when, once more thy pardon and farewell !

The very God ! think, Abib ; dost thou think ?  
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—  
So, through the thunder comes a human voice  
Saying, ' O heart I made, a heart beats here !  
Face, My hands fashioned, see it in Myself.  
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of Mine,  
But love I gave thee, with Myself to love, 310  
And thou must love Me who have died for thee !'  
The madman saith He said so : it is strange.

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OXFORD: HORACE HART M.A.  
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

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MAY 23 1935



